Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 173

www.saipantribune.com | THURSDAY AUGUST 31, 2023 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune

CUC got $152M in grants; $75.9M already obligated. PAGE 2

New pact strengthens US-Palau Pacific stewardship. PAGE 7

$1

WITHOUT CHINESE TOURISTS

'Critical to find new market'

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Like the rest of the CNMI, the Commonwealth Ports Authority will only continue to suffer if the CNMI does not find a way to get new tourism markets online to replace the China market, according to CPA chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds.

As it is right now, she said

See CRITICAL on Page 4

Gas prices up 10 cents

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Fuel prices in the CNMI continue to increase steadily, with local oil companies raising prices by another 10 cents yesterday.

Shell Marianas is once again leading the way after it raised its prices yesterday afternoon. Although Mobil Oil Marianas usually takes the lead in setting gas prices in the CNMI, it seems the oil company had yet to change its prices by 7:40pm as of press time. It is expected to do so today.

With these recent increases

See GAS on Page 4

IN DRAFTING SENATE VERSION OF BUDGET BILL

Challenge is where to cut close to $900K — Manglona

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The challenging part in drafting the Senate version of the CNMI government's budget for fiscal year 2024 is figuring out where to cut the nearly $900,000 that the bicameral conference committee had agreed will be the net resources for next fiscal year.

That's according to Sen. Donald M. Manglona (Ind-Ro-

See CHALLENGE on Page 4

Manglona

OAG opposes parole for convicted murderer, kidnapper, others

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Office of the Attorney General's Criminal Division strongly opposes granting parole to a convicted murderer and kidnapper, among others who are applying for early release from prison.

OAG Criminal Division chief prosecutor Chester Hinds, in letters addressed to acting CNMI Board of Parole

See OAG on Page 4

'TOUCHBACK' COUNTDOWN

Number of days left until the "touchback" rule takes effect on Sept. 30, 2023:

30

MAKING GARAPAN GREEN

Max Roberto, left, and Pedro Ucherbelau of the CNMI Division of Parks & Recreation replant in August the first set of a planned 28 Pink Tecoma trees in Garapan. The replacement of trees lost due to storms and other factors is funded by the Marianas Visitors Authority toward developing a more eco-friendly destination. For aesthetic reasons, Pink Tecomas will also replace coconut trees and other species that had been temporarily planted. MVA

INSIDE

BUSINESS
IT&E announces the promotion of Velma M. Palacios to the position of IT&E CNMI chief.
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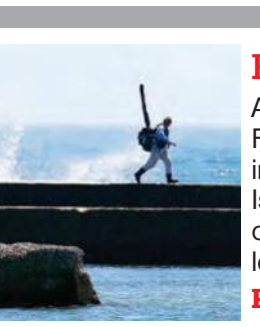

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As Japan releases Fukushima wastewater into the ocean, Pacific Islanders are reminded of a never-ending nuclear legacy
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Local

INFILTRATION SYSTEM
Construction workers continue the installation on Friday of an infiltrator system in the drainage on the side of Beach Road as part of the ongoing Beach Road Improvement Project. GPPC is the contractor of the multi-million federally funded project that involves the resurfacing and other improvements to a significant portion of Beach Road.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

CUC got $152M in grants; $75.9M already obligated

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. received about $152 million in federal grants and $75.9 million of that amount was obligated last month, according to CUC acting executive director Betty G. Terlaje.

Terlaje

In her report during a recent CUC board meeting, Terlaje said the grants came from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, American Rescue Plan Act, U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Department of Defense, Community Development Block Grant, and other local appropriations.

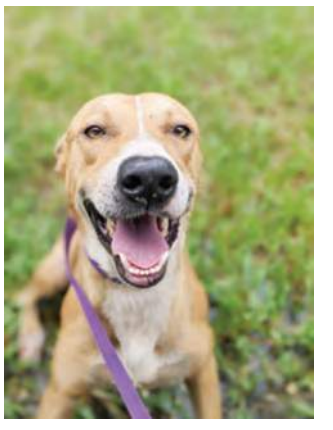
She said they submitted an additional $27 million grant applications last month primarily for Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition technical assistance, and for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law work plan for the water and wastewater system improvements.

Of the $27 million, $4 million was requested for another work plan for water and wastewater system improvements, and another $848,000 for the 20-megawatt utility-scale solar photovoltaics with 26-megawatt battery energy storage system.

Terlaje said $726,000 was requested for the progressive implementation of the strategic plan for prepaid meter conversion.

PET OF THE WEEK

Hulk



Hulk is a male dog who is big, handsome, and sweet. He is a pitbull mix at about 60 lbs.

He is available for adoption at the Saipan Mayor's Office Animal Shelter in As Perdido. Shelter hours are from Monday to Friday, 7:30am to 4:30pm. Contact them if you are interested at (670)-234-3647 (DOGS).

For inquiries about veterinary services reach out to Saipan Humane Society at info@saipanhumanesociety.org or WhatsApp +1 (670) 838-7387.

Saipan Tribune is partnering with Lauren Cabrera, founder of the Saipan Humane Society, in collaboration with the SMO Animal Shelter in As Perdido, to feature their adoptable dogs into loving homes. Whether you are looking for a guard dog, lap dog, hiking buddy, or playful puppy, they most likely have the dog for you!

WRITTEN BY EDUCATORS FOR EDUCATORS

New book by educators offers uniquely regional perspectives

What do you get when you collect the thoughts of dozens of new and seasoned teachers whose experiences range from middle school to high school and university classroom settings?

Nearly two years in the making, the collective effort has produced the 310-page *Teaching & Learning in Micronesia: Reflections on Island Centered Pedagogy."*

A product of the University of Guam, it offers a collection of essays by teachers about their vast and rich classroom experiences, offering uniquely Guam and Micronesian perspectives and interactions between students and teachers.

"Written by educators for educators, these reflections on island-centered pedagogy offer insights into the cultural diversity among our student populations and their perspectives," said UOG president Anita Borja Enriquez. "The more we share the uniqueness of island wisdom and our diverse cultures, the more educators are equipped with knowledge and cultural competency to support our students."

The book is available for free starting this week and will be distributed through UOG's network of teachers across the island.

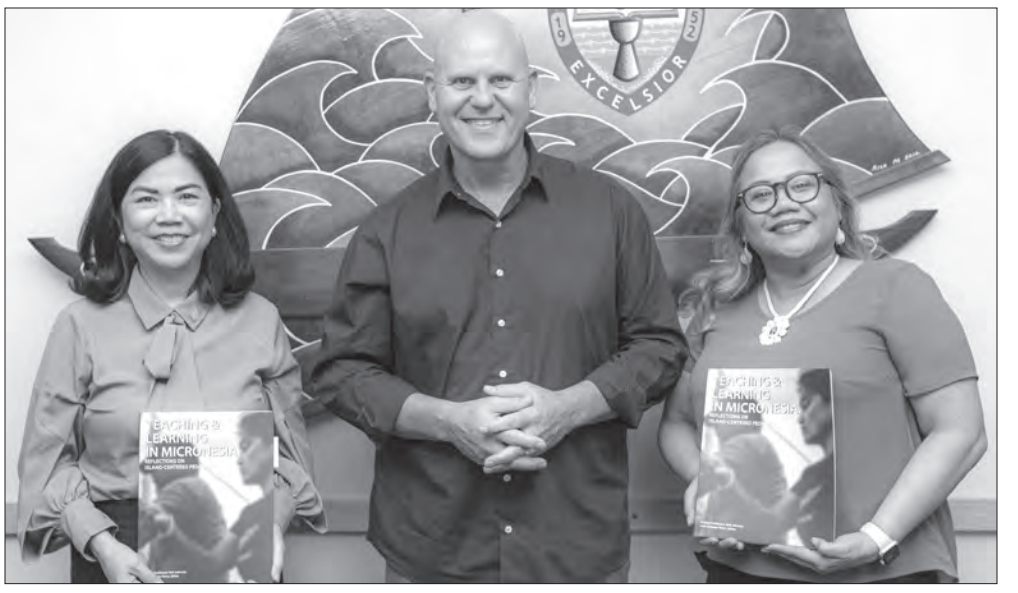
Copies were also gifted on Thursday, Aug. 24, to future teachers attending classes at the UOG School of Education.

Dr. Kirk Johnson, UOG professor of sociology, facilitated the book project with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The book is the outcome of a series of seminars held in 2022 with some 60 educators in Guam who gathered to reflect and learn with each other about how their classrooms could truly be transformative spaces where students from diverse backgrounds take ownership of their own learning. A grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities helped to facilitate the seminars with the overarching title: "Towards a more perfect union: Teaching and Learning in Micronesia."

Sharing diverse insights

"When teachers share their diverse insights within the context of the Micronesia setting, it becomes a convergence of experiences from both new and veteran educators that has contributed toward a very rich published volume that we hope will inspire many others here in Guam and throughout the region," said Johnson.



UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

University of Guam president Dr. Anita Borja Enriquez, first from left, holds a copy of the book Teaching & Learning in Micronesia: Reflections on Island Centered Pedagogy. Enriquez is joined by Dr. Kirk Johnson, center, UOG professor of sociology who facilitated the book project, and interim senior vice president and provost Dr. Sharleen Santos-Bamba.

The project drew inspiration, in part, from the island concept of setting sail on a canoe.

"During this voyage, we came to discover certain foundational concepts that we feel are important and can act as a rudder and guide for our canoe. As teachers in Micronesia, we appreciate the importance of embracing a humble posture of learning in all that we do," according to Johnson.

The educators also produced a set of ideals to strive for.

"Faith in the capacity of every student will prove essential if we are to elicit from them wholehearted participation in the learning process," Dr. Johnson wrote in the book's introduction.

'Soak in the narratives'

In the book's foreword, UOG's interim senior vice president and provost Sharleen Santos-Bamba described the topics and essays as inspirational.

"Explore this text. Soak in the narratives. Share the stories. Advocate for change. Live and be kind," Santos-Bamba wrote.

Dr. Clare Ann Camacho, a UOG consultant and retired UOG faculty, who co-wrote the grant with Johnson, said the book can provide guidance for teachers to reflect on how to provoke thinking and learning in their classrooms.

To learn more about how to get a copy of the book, contact Johnson at the College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences or email him at kjohnson@triton.uog.edu. ***(PR)***

New date for Pre-Position, Disaster Preparedness presentation

As part of its efforts to expand the Commonwealth's disaster readiness, the CNMI Homeland Security and Emergency Management Office is inviting food distribution (catering) vendors and heavy equipment rental companies to the first Pre-Position, Disaster Preparedness Presentation that will be held on Sept.7, 2023—not Aug. 23 as earlier reported—at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan, from 8am to 2pm.

» Food vendors, heavy equipment rental companies invited to attend

The presentation will focus on lessons learned from previous disasters about the procurement of goods and services related to food catering services and heavy equipment rental. The discussion will also include procurement requirements, regulations, and procedures to help expedite the purchasing process in anticipation of and preparation for future disasters.

To register for the 2023 Pre-Position Planning Information Brief, visit and register at this site: https://forms.gle/FNDdNkFnfc7WEALh9. One representative from each vendor will be allowed to attend. Additional meetings with other categories of vendors will be held at other future dates.

For more information about the presentation, contact Naomi Tagabuel by calling (670) 488-1001 or email naomi.ada@cnmihsem.gov.mp. ***(PR)***

Bill seeks to appropriate $1.9M poker fees to SHEFA, OAG, DOC, others

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Blas Jonathan T. Attao (Ind-Saipan) has introduced a local bill that seeks to appropriate $1.93 million in poker fee revenue to the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance program, Saipan Mayor's Office, Office of the Attorney General, Department of Corrections, and other agencies.

Attao

Under Attao's House Local Bill 23-24, which is co-sponsored by several other lawmakers, $1.55 million will be appropriated to the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance program, with $250,000 to be reserved for SHEFA personnel and operations.

Of the remaining $385,000, $100,000 will be appropriated to the Saipan Mayor's Office for personnel and/or operations; $50,000 for the Northern Islands Mayor's Office personnel and/or operations; $50,000 for the Saipan Humane Society Inc.; $50,000 for the Office of the Attorney General's Criminal Division; $75,000 for the Saipan Zoning Office; and $60,000 for the Department of Corrections' rehabilitation and upgrade of the Juvenile Detention Section.

Under the bill, the Finance secretary is tasked with regulating and controlling the expenditure of the funds.

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Tel: (670) 664-4282 • Fax: (670) 235-5131

Job Vacancy Announcement

JVA No. 23-058 (RE-ANNOUNCEMENT)
Opening Date: Monday, August 21, 2023
Closing Date: Friday, September 1, 2023

POSITION TITLE:	Grants Writer
DEPARTMENT:	Executive Director/Grants Office
LOCATION:	Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA
ANNUAL SALARY:	$37,756.00 to $50,970.00 per annum, Exempt
CONTRACT:	Contracted
POSITION(S):	One (1)

The incumbent will be under the direct supervision of the Grants Administrator. The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation ("CUC") is seeking for a qualified Grants Writer who will be responsible to research on potential federal government agencies offering grants exclusively for utility-oriented project(s).

Duties:
- Writes, edits, and proofreads proposals in accordance with grantor standards and requirements and in-line with utility milestones.
- Works along-side Division Managers, Project Managers and/or Engineers in order to attain a comprehensive project proposal(s) meeting grant required standards.
- Maintains and tracks grant requests and reporting requirements.
- Maintains grant data and files regarding information about grantors, including contact information, requests for funding, reporting requirements, deadlines, and whether the requests are funded or not funded corresponding to existing funded or partially-funded projects.
- Corresponds with prospects and grantors, including following up to check on status of proposals and reporting back to them on their program investments.
- Coordinates with the Grants Administrator in response to questions concerning grant requirements and compliance.
- Prepares accurate and timely progress report(s) and regularly informs Grants Administrator of project status and any deviation from established timeline or goals and for Executive Director monthly reporting.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:
Education: Associate's Degree in Business Administration, Public Administration or directly related field and four (4) years of experience in grants or grants administration with a proven track record in securing new funding opportunities, comprehensive knowledge of research and the ability to distinguish and identify funding opportunities for special programs; or, an equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to successfully perform the essential duties of the job such as those listed above.

Proficiency in the applications of Microsoft software – Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook.

Knowledge of: Applicable Federal, Commonwealth and local laws, codes, regulations and/or ordinances; Program administration principles; Customer service principles; Mathematical concepts; Research methods; Database and records management principles; Modern office technology.

Skills in: Interpreting and applying applicable laws, codes, regulations and standards; Administering and monitoring programs, policies and processes; Coordinating the implementation of human resource services; Researching and analyzing program-related data and resource information; Providing customer service; Interpreting policies and providing relevant information and guidance; Prioritizing work in order to meet time-sensitive program deadlines; Tracking and auditing data, forms, records and documentation; Preparing reports, correspondence, and program support materials; Updating and maintaining information systems and confidential records; Coordinating and assisting with projects; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

Abilities: Must have excellent writing and computer skills and database management skills; Must be highly organized with the ability to implement systems and follow-up processes, able to effectively work under pressure, use independent judgment and produce quality work product within tight time constraints.

Licensing:
o Valid CNMI Driver's License with appropriate class.

All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

How to Apply: Submit a completed CUC Employment Application, resume, and applicable supporting documents to the CUC Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, Monday through Friday 7:30 am – 4:30 pm (Except Legal Holidays). Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota may submit their documents to their respective CUC Administration office. Application, resume and supporting documents can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org.

P. O. Box 501220, Third Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-4282 • Fax: (670) 235-5131
CUC is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

EEOC issues proposed rule to implement Pregnant Workers Fairness Act

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to implement the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.

The NPRM was published for public comment in the *Federal Register* last Aug. 11. Members of the public wishing to comment on the NPRM will have 60 days from the date of publication to do so through www.regulations.gov.

"The PWFA is a step forward for workers, families and the economy. This important new civil rights law promotes the economic security and health of pregnant and postpartum workers by providing them with access to support on the job to keep working, which helps employers retain critical talent," said EEOC chair Charlotte A. Burrows. "The EEOC's bipartisan proposed regulation furthers the agency's leadership role in fulfilling the promise of the PWFA's protections. We encourage the public to provide meaningful feedback about how the proposal would impact workplaces and ways to assist employers and workers in understanding the law."

The PWFA requires covered employers to provide reasonable accommodations to a worker's known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, unless the accommodation will cause the employer an undue hardship. This law builds upon existing protections against pregnancy discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and access to reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The NPRM was approved by majority vote of the Commission on Aug. 1, 2023. The NPRM explains how the EEOC proposes to interpret the PWFA and certain terms in the statute, such as "temporary," "essential functions," and "communicated to the employer." It also provides numerous examples of possible reasonable accommodations and seeks input on whether there should be more examples and for what additional different situations. In addition, the EEOC solicits information and comment on particular issues, including existing data quantifying the proportion of pregnant workers who need workplace accommodations, and existing data on the average cost of pregnancy-related accommodations.

"The EEOC's bipartisan proposed regulation helps to bring the promise of this transformative law to life, enabling pregnant and postpartum workers to retain their jobs while maintaining a healthy pregnancy and recovering from childbirth," said vice chair Jocelyn Samuels. "The regulation provides concrete, real-world examples that help workers understand their rights and help employers comply with the new law and reap the benefit of retaining skilled employees."

"As an advocate for the passage of the PWFA itself, I am proud to have collaborated with my fellow Commissioners to propose a bipartisan rule to help implement this important law," said commissioner Andrea R. Lucas. "I look forward to the EEOC's continued work ahead to make the PWFA's promise a reality for women and families nationwide."

The PWFA is bipartisan legislation that was signed into law by President Joe Biden on Dec. 29, 2022. The EEOC enforces the PWFA and began accepting charges on June 27, 2023, the day the law became effective. The PWFA requires the EEOC to issue regulations to implement the law by Dec. 29, 2023.

The EEOC previously has released educational resources including a set of resources on the PWFA, called "What You Should Know About the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act," including a webinar for employers, an informational poster for healthcare facilities, tips for workers to request accommodations, a short video series, and a revised "Know Your Rights" poster required to be posted in most workplaces.

The EEOC will continue to update "What You Should Know about the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act" as more information is available.

The EEOC advances opportunity in the workplace by enforcing federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination. More information is available at www.eeoc.gov. ***(EEOC)***

GAS

From page 1

in prices, a gallon of regular fuel now goes from $5.56 per gallon to $5.66. Diesel went up from $5.98 per gallon to $6.08.

This follows a string of increases in the last few weeks, with the first increase seen back on July 19. After more than two months of steady fuel prices, Mobil Oil Marianas broke the streak with a 15-cent increase. Regular fuel went up from $5.11 per gallon to $5.26 per gallon.

Less than a week after, on July 25, Shell Marianas surprised the CNMI community when it took the lead in implementing a 10-cent increase that brought regular fuel prices up from $5.26 per gallon to $5.36.

Again, less than a week after, on Aug. 2, gas went up 15 cents. Fuel went up from $5.36 per gallon to $5.51.

Following the Aug. 2 increase, local oil companies raised their prices again in a little over two weeks by 5 cents, with fuel increasing from $5.51 per gallon to $5.56.

A Shell Marianas price board shows the new prices of gas. KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

CHALLENGE

From page 1

ta) yesterday, who said the other challenging part is to identify additional funding to address the proposed allocations for Tinian.

The bicameral conference committee adopted on Tuesday a concurrent resolution that sets the ceiling of the government's projected resources for fiscal year 2024 at $163.4 million, which is $9.1 million lower than Gov. Arnold I. Palacios' proposed budget.

The conferees resolved that the actual revenue resources for appropriation is $106,357,955, but with the addition of suspended earmarks, the total resources for appropriation is $114,238,931.

The Senate's and the House's original versions of the concurrent resolution bring to $115,407,265 the net local revenue and resources available for appropriations.

Last Aug. 10, Rep. Patrick H. San Nicolas (R-Tinian) voted against passing the House's fiscal year 2024 budget legislation because he believes that the bill does not fund the 108 employees needed by the Tinian Mayor's Office.

At the Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee's budget hearing last Aug. 17, Tinian and Aguiguan Mayor Edwin P. Aldan said if the Senate passes the House's version of the budget, he will be informing all 96 employees of the Tinian municipality by Oct. 1 that their employment contracts will not be renewed.

Manglona, who chairs the Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee, said yesterday that they will discuss allocations this week and that if they don't have issues, they hope to adopt the Senate budget bill by Sept. 6.

The Fiscal Affairs Committee is done with the budget hearings for most agencies.

OAG

From page 1

chair Lucinda Selepeo, opposed the early release for all six parole applicants.

The parole board, which convened a hearing yesterday to hear the applications of six inmates, considered the case of convicted murderer Randy Anthony Igisomar and convicted kidnapper Titomar K. Bhuiyan.

The other parole applicants were convicted drug dealers Kui Zhang and Derik Jonathan Camacho Reyes, convicted burglar Calistro Acosta Crisostomo, and convicted robber Bradley Defang.

For Igisomar, who was convicted of murder back in 2012, Hinds said that serving only 11 years of his 22-year sentence is grossly inadequate for the heinous crime he committed.

"Inmate [pleaded] guilty and was sentenced to serve 22 years for the charges of murder in the first degree, committed during the perpetration of burglary and/or robbery. The inmate has served 11 years and another 11 years remain on this particularly heinous crime, the most serious offense we face as a society. Having served only 11 years is grossly inadequate considering his debt can never be repaid," he said.

Hinds said the OAG's position is that murder in the first degree demands significant incarceration.

"This type of deviant behavior demands significant incarceration to prevent the possibility of other acts of violence by this particular inmate, as well as to serve as a deterrent to other in the community that this type of behavior and crimes such as murder ultimately will not be tolerated," Hinds said.

The chief prosecutor also noted that a review of the Department of Corrections' institutional conduct report on Igisomar shows that he was not always a model inmate.

"Inmate was sanctioned on five separate violations. Inmate was placed in isolation ranging between seven to 30 days resulting from violations such as possession of cellular phone and possession of [a] lighter. Inmate was also sanctioned [for] 15 days for possession of [a] lighter and tobacco, possession of cigarette, and possession of snuff," he said. "The inmate's actions during his incarceration displays significant signs that the inmate fails to comply and adhere to instructions, rules, order, and, most importantly, the law."

In the case of Bhuiyan, who pleaded guilty to kidnapping, the victim reportedly supports his release, but Hinds said it is the position of the OAG that it is in the interest of justice and the welfare of the Commonwealth that parole be denied for a convicted kidnapper.

"Granting the inmate early release does not apply equal justice. It undermines the authority of the justice system and the trust of the community. It ultimately suggests that violent offenders such as Bhuiyan can commit such serious crimes and still receive lenient treatment, and this would certainly be unfair to the law-abiding citizens who expect justice to be served," he said.

"This justice system is aimed [at rehabilitating] offenders. Having…Bhuiyan serve his full 16-year sentence will hopefully deter him from future criminal acts," Hinds added.

The Board of Parole is set to reconvene today to continue the parole hearings.

CRITICAL

From page 1

CPA is faced with a dilemma where they need to significantly increase airport rental rates to keep the CNMI's ports open.

"We're going to adopt a new rate methodology. As I stated before, it's based on cost recovery. So what we're looking at is basically different scenarios to try to lessen the impact on the airline carriers—basically airport rates and charges. We have to find money to operate," she said.

King-Hinds said this dilemma will only continue until the CNMI either bring back the China market, rapidly expand the influx of tourists from the CNMI's largest market pre-pandemic, or find new markets to replace the China market.

"We are in a world of hurt because we don't have the China market online. That's a fact. If you compare pre-pandemic and post-pandemic arrival numbers, we are nowhere near where we need to be. Absent the China market, we will not reach those numbers unless we get new markets online. That has a significant impact on our ability to keep rates down," she said.

Despite the increase in arrivals that the Marianas Visitors Arrival is reporting, that the CNMI is seeing a 1,000% increase in arrival numbers, King-Hinds say this is a comparison between apples and oranges "because what we should be doing is comparing pre-pandemic arrivals to post-pandemic arrivals. If you're comparing post-pandemic numbers to pandemic numbers, obviously it's going to be a 1,000% increase because we had zero arrivals during the pandemic."

In a previous *Saipan Tribune* article, King-Hinds shared that the only budget scenarios before the CPA board that would allow CPA to continue its airport operations includes a 70% to 79% increase in CPA's current airport rental rates.

CPA is set to hold an emergency board meeting today to discuss its fiscal year 2024 budget.

King-Hinds said that, based on the viable scenarios that would allow CPA to maintain its operations, the board will be discussing the implementation of a 70% increase or more in its current airport rental rates.

"What we anticipate is exactly what we've been saying since April—we are going to see rates and charges at the airport go up significantly. Right now, we're looking at a potential 79% increase in rates," she said.

Airport rentals do not only refer to rent paid for actual physical space like a store, but also refers to the assigned gate for each airline—called a terminal rental.

King-Hinds shared that one of the budget scenarios that will be discussed today is raising the current average terminal rental rate per square foot from $18 to a little over $32.

"All the scenarios we're looking at now is around that rate. It's going to increase because we don't have [American Rescue Plan Act] funds to supplement our budget, and we don't have the carrier numbers to split the cost in terms of these rentals and landing fees. We have multiple scenarios that we're looking at and we're trying to see which will be least painful for our airline partners," she said.

Despite this possible significant increase in airport rates, King-Hinds said CPA will still need to cut down on operations as there just aren't enough airlines coming to the CNMI.

From 'tourism education' to 'special education' for Aniga

With the 2023 Marianas Tourism Golf Classic fast approaching on Saturday, Sept. 2, on Saipan, the recipient of the first postsecondary scholarship from tournament beneficiary Marianas Tourism Education Council is also teeing off on her doctorate in Special Education this fall.

Reynafe Aniga was president of the Saipan Southern High School MY WAVE (Marianas Youth Welcome All Visitors Enthusiastically) Club when she graduated in 2017, after first joining the tourism club in middle school.

"I joined MYWAVE as a member because of how active the club was in the community," said Aniga. "Their frequent beach cleanups and other fun participation in community events were really appealing to me. I saw it as a way of expanding my learning outside of the classroom. MYWAVE gave me multiple opportunities to learn about Saipan and its hospitality industry, and being a MYWAVE officer helped me develop leadership skills."

Aniga's favorite memory of MYWAVE is participating in the Marianas Visitors Authority's annual Christmas in the Marianas caroling contest and parade, where the club won first place for skit and caroling for three years in a row. She says the MTEC seed scholarship of $1,000 helped her move forward in her college plans.

"Because of my experience with hospitality and tourism through MYWAVE, I was inspired to pursue a degree in that field. So, I applied to the No. 1 school in hospitality, which is at the University of Nevada Las Vegas," she said. "I got accepted and moved, but during my time here [in Las Vegas] I was exposed to so many different things that led to my switch in careers."

Aniga is now a registered behavior technician who provides therapy to autistic children. She is working on getting her board-certified behavior analyst credentials, just a step up from the behavior technician position. She has a BA degree in Psychology, a minor in Neuroscience, and an MA in Special Education with the specialty of Applied Behavior Analysis.

"Throughout my entire time here...I've applied the leadership skills and people skills that I've learned from being involved with MYWAVE," said Aniga. "My current career centers on working with people, which is similar to the tourism/hospitality industry. I may have switched to a career so different [from] my initial plan, but the ideals of being welcoming and compassionate toward people I work with remain the same."

Photo shows Reynafe Aniga's graduation from the Master's in Special Education program at the University of Nevada Las Vegas last December 2022.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A portion of the proceeds of the Marianas Tourism Golf Classic will go toward offering a scholarship to a graduating senior who has been a member of MYWAVE during high school. Tournament registration forms and sponsorship details are now available on the Marianas Calendar at www.mymarianas.com, and the early bird registration fee of $120 was extended to yesterday.

"Even if you are unsure about whether or not you want to work in the tourism/hospitality field, the connections you make and the skills you build will be something that you can hold onto and apply regardless of where you go!" said Aniga. "Biba MYWAVE!"

Tournament registration—including payment—is being accepted at LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort (credit card or cash only) and the MVA office (cash or check only) on Beach Road, Garapan, in the Gold Beach Hotel building. Checks should be made payable to Marianas Tourism Education Council. Optional play is $30.

For more information, contact Marianas Tourism Golf Classic committee chair Martin Duenas at mduenas@mymarianas.com or committee member Jack Aranda at jaranda@mymarianas.com or call 1 (670) 664-3200/1. ***(PR)***

ECO-FRIENDLY SIGHT
The first set of a planned 28 Pink Tecoma trees are replanted in Garapan this month. The replacement of trees lost due to storms and other factors is funded by the Marianas Visitors Authority toward developing an eco-friendly destination. For aesthetic reasons, Pink Tecomas will also replace coconut trees and other species that had been temporarily planted. MVA

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JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
 # 05-2023(b)

Opening date: August 14, 2023 **Closing date: September 01, 2023**

Location: SAIPAN		**SALARY**
Position(s):	(1) Airport Manager	UNGRADED
	(1) ARFF Mechanic II	PL 6/1 to 6/12 ($9.27/hr to $15.85/hr)
	(1) AOA Controller I	PL 5/1 to 5/12 ($8.83/hr to $15.10/hr)
	(1) Master Electrician	PL 19/1 to 19/12 ($17.48/hr to $29.90/hr)
Location: TINIAN		**SALARY**
Position(s):	(2) Ports Police/ARFF Trainee	PL 5/1 to 5/12 ($8.83/hr)
Location: ROTA		**SALARY**
Position(s):	(1) Rota Ports Manager	UNGRADED
	(2) Custodial/Maintenance-I	PL 2/1 to 2/12 ($7.63/hr. to $13.04/hr.)
	(1) AOA Controller/Ground Maintenance I	PL 5/1 to 5/12($8.83/hr. to $15.10/hr.)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or ***CPA Administration Office, Tinian International Airport, or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport.*** Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport is no later than **5:00 P.M. on Friday, September 01, 2023.**

Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin, Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.robert@cnmiports.com and hrspecialist@cnmiports.com or by phone at (670)237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
P. O. Box 501220, Third Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan, MP 96950
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Job Vacancy Announcement

JVA No. 23-102 (RE-ANNOUNCEMENT)
Opening Date: Monday, August 21, 2023
Closing Date: Friday, September 1, 2023

POSITION TITLE:	**Trades Technician-Electrician**
DEPARTMENT:	**Rota Power Generation**
LOCATION:	**Rota, Northern Marianas Islands, USA**
ANNUAL SALARY:	**$20,826.00 to $28,115.00 per annum, Non-Exempt**
CONTRACT:	**Not Contracted**
POSITION(S):	**One (1)**

The incumbent will be under the direct supervision of the Power Generation Manager or his/her designee. This class specification represents only the core areas of responsibilities; specific position assignments will vary depending on the needs of the department.

Duties:
- Performs maintenance, operations, installations, troubleshooting and/or repairs of Generator, switchgears and engine control panels of various brands/make/model, Motor Control Center, Transformer, Protection relays and overhead crane.
- Reads and interprets electrical diagrams and codes, USA standards, Japanese standards, European standards, & NEC (National Electrical Code).
- Knowledge in AC/DC system, Single and three phase system, Lighting and outlets, Paging system, Fire alarm & Battery bank.
- Familiar with the usage of various electrical test equipment; Multimeter tester, Insulation resistance tester, Transformer tester, Ground resistance tester, & Hydrometer.
- Familiar with the usage of various electrical tools Crimper, Pipe bender, Hydraulic knock out puncher, Pipe threader, Micrometer, & Vernier caliper.
- Familiar with the usage of various power and pneumatic tools, Portable drill, Grinder, & Impact wrench.
- Operates specialized and heavy equipment. Emergency generator, Forklift, & Overhead crane.
- Attends to Trouble calls after normal working hours.
- Maintains daily reports. Practices SAFETY, Cleans, organizes and maintains work areas.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:
Education: High School Diploma, General Education Diploma, or Adult Basic Education. Graduate from a Vocational/Technical Institution as an Electrician or related field. Must demonstrate having had (A) four (4) years of increasingly responsible experience in a diesel engine power plant and (B) those four (4) years of increasingly responsible experience in performing electrical duties.

Knowledge of: Applicable Federal, Commonwealth and local laws, codes, regulations and/or ordinances; Mechanical and electrical principles, practices and operations of power plant equipment. Customer service principles; Mathematical concepts; Inventory maintenance practices; Taking equipment readings and maintaining reading data; Inspection procedures; Safety procedures and safe work practices; Modern office technology.

Skills in: Performing inspections and analyzing system and equipment data; Interpreting and applying applicable laws, codes, regulations and standard operating procedures; Monitoring plant equipment and making adjustments; Identifying electrical and mechanical issues and recommending or implementing solutions; Initiating requests and trouble calls and providing assistance; Preparing and updating activity logs and status reports; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction. Able to lift and carry heavy objects of 45 pounds and over, climb ladders, reach above the shoulders, stand, sit, crawl and kneel for prolonged periods and perform repeated bending. Recognize color codes, operate cranes and motor vehicles. Occasionally use solvents, de-greasing agents, or other chemical agents, and be assigned to protracted or irregular hours of work; exposed to dust, oil, grease, constant or excessive noise, vibration, and smoke and gas fumes. Work closely with others and/or alone depending on assigned daily activities.

Must be available to work 24/7 rotation shift to include weekends, holidays, and on-call.

Licensing: Valid Driver's License with appropriate class.

All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

How to Apply: Submit a completed CUC Employment Application, resume, and applicable supporting documents to the CUC Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, Monday through Friday 7:30 am – 4:30 pm (Except Legal Holidays). Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota may submit their documents to their respective CUC Administration office. Application, resume and supporting documents can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org.

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Thirteen hurdle fifth Childcare Bootcamp at GCC

» Childcare Leadership Bootcamp slated for October

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Thirteen individuals have successfully completed the fifth Childcare Bootcamp at the Guam Community College and were recognized during a completion ceremony last Aug. 11, 2023.

GUAM—Thirteen individuals have successfully completed the fifth Childcare Bootcamp and were recognized during a completion ceremony last Aug. 11, 2023. The Childcare Bootcamp was funded by the Department of Public Health and Social Services and developed by the Guam Economic Development Authority and the Guam Community College to provide island families with qualified daycare providers to meet the critical shortage in available and affordable daycare and afterschool programs.

"Today, we celebrate the hard work and dedication of all of these completers," said GCC president Dr. Mary A. Y. Okada. "They will help rebuild our economy, by providing day care services for our young ones so their parents and guardians can seek employment, or go to school. They will help to shape the minds of our children."

Leanza Joy Selvidge, bootcamp completer and Sinajana Day Camp admissions and programs officer was asked by Mayor Robert Hoffman if she would like to participate in the bootcamp. Selvidge agreed and is happy that she signed up.

"The course enlightened me on how to deal with young children and how to encourage them while at our facility for day camp," said Selvidge. "I also use the skills I have learned with my daughter. I will take the benefits of my training back to my community in Sinajana and apply it to our afterschool program, so that parents can rest assured that their children are in a safe environment and in a positive learning and nurturing setting so they may return to us year after year."

Participants in this bootcamp completed a seven-week curriculum including Early Childhood Education Orientation and Child Growth & Development. Other courses included Heartsaver First Aid, CPR, AED, and WorkKeys®. This program is free to qualified applicants who are accepted into the program.

A Childcare Leadership Bootcamp is planned for October 2023. This bootcamp is targeted for childcare providers wanting to manage a childcare facility. Contact GCC's Office of Continuing Education and Workforce Development to learn more about this or other bootcamps that you can avail of at no or little cost to you. Email workforce@guamcc.edu or call 671-735-5640. ***(GCC)***

More than 20M households enroll in US broadband affordability program

WASHINGTON, D.C.—More than 20 million American households have enrolled in the Federal Communications Commission's Affordable Connectivity Program, which is the nation's largest broadband affordability program, according to FCC chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel.

Thanks to funding support in the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, millions of families who previously could not get online or struggled to pay for this modern-day necessity are now connected. Eligible low-income households can receive a discount of up to $30 per month toward internet service and up to $75 per month for eligible households on qualifying Tribal lands. Eligible households can also receive a one-time discount of up to $100 to purchase a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet from participating providers if the household contributes more than $10 and less than $50 toward the purchase price.

"For a long time, closing the digital divide focused on one part of the equation—the lack of physical infrastructure to get online. But we know that for many people, even when there was technically access, the cost to get online was too high. Thanks to investments from Congress, we have new tools to tackle both challenges, including the Affordable Connectivity Program that is helping struggling families to get or stay online to pay for this modern-day necessity," said Rosenworcel. "Enrolling more than 20 million eligible households is no small feat—and wouldn't be possible without the partnership of organizations in rural, suburban, and urban communities across the country who are getting the word about this powerful program. We've made too much progress in helping families get online to turn back now."

A household is eligible for the Affordable Connectivity Program if:

- Their household income is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, about $60,000 a year for a family of four or $29,000 a year for an individual;
- Anyone in the household, including children or dependents, participates in certain government assistance programs like SNAP, Medicaid, WIC, Federal Housing Assistance or others;
- Anyone in the household participates in the National School Lunch Program or the School Breakfast Program;
- Anyone in the household received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year;
- Anyone in the household already receives a Lifeline benefit; or
- A household may also qualify for the ACP through a participating provider's existing low-income program.

In order to reach this month's enrollment milestone, the FCC heavily engaged local, state and federal organizations to serve as ACP outreach and awareness-raising partners. To date, the FCC has hosted or participated in more than 1,400-plus virtual and in-person awareness and enrollment events, and offers outreach materials in more than 10 languages. In addition to closely collaborating with other federal agencies to promote program enrollment, the FCC is also conducting a nationwide paid media public awareness campaign with the support of congressional funding set aside for outreach efforts. Relatedly, the FCC has committed over $72 million in grants at the state and local level, with 228 ACP Outreach Grants issued to trusted state, local, and Tribal governments and community partners.

Along with extensive outreach efforts, the FCC also highlighted important consumer benefits to eligible households and outreach partners. These consumer protections included a multilingual ACP Support Center, FCC rules to protect consumers participating in the ACP, and a dedicated FCC process for ACP complaints should consumers run into issues with the program.

To learn more about the impact of the FCC's Affordable Connectivity Program, visit the program's data dashboard. Additionally, for those interested in sharing information about the ACP with their community, you can find consumer outreach materials available at https://www.fcc.gov/acp-consumer-outreach-toolkit or https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov/community-resources/, including Spanish and ASL informational videos about the program. For a full list of eligibility requirements and more information about the ACP, visit GetInternet.gov. ***(FCC)***

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Job Vacancy Announcement

JVA No. 23-069 (RE-ANNOUNCEMENT)
Opening Date: Monday, August 21, 2023
Closing Date: Friday, September 1, 2023

POSITION TITLE:	**Fiscal Assistant: Meter Reader**
DEPARTMENT:	**COA/Billing**
LOCATION:	**Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA**
ANNUAL SALARY:	**$19,616.00 to $22,602.00 per annum, (plus Hazardous pay) Non-Exempt**
CONTRACT:	**Not Contracted**
POSITION(S):	**Two (2)**

The incumbent will be under the direct supervision of the Chief of Administration or his/her designee.

Duties:
- Required to work in the field obtaining utility meter readings for electric and water consumption meters, deep well or outflow meters and other similar devices and entering data in hand-held computers or devices.
- Performs work orders for customer service verifications and investigations. Reports findings and recommends solutions and updates customer accounts.
- Performs research on account discrepancies or unusual meter readings and consumption. Reports irregularities or reasons for fluctuations.
- Prepares reports of findings, deficiencies and recommendations to assist in investigations and billing resolutions as needed.
- Inspects, repairs, replaces or disconnects utility meters and equipment and services.
- Assigns routing numbers for customer locations.
- Monitors meters for damaged or unauthorized connections and tampering.
- Assists in reviewing cycles, work orders, and readings in preparation of bill processing.
- Assists in the processing and printing of customer bills and delivery of bills and notices.
- Assists other divisions with mapping projects, locations, and other requirements.
- Operates and maintains use of government vehicles; conducts basic vehicle inspections to ensure they are in proper working order and recommends service and maintenance of vehicles.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:
Education: High School Diploma or GED or ABE Program AS Diploma.

Knowledge of: Customer service principles; Basic mathematical principles; Recordkeeping principles; Safety principles and safe work practices; Applicable equipment used in field utility services (based on assignment); Modern office technology.

Skills in: Coordinating services with other departments or resources; Inspecting and operating field equipment related to utility usage (based on assignment); Performing basic mathematical calculations; Researching account information or discrepancies; Preparing and maintaining files, forms, reports and records; Copying and scanning documents; Updating, maintaining and preparing reports and spreadsheet tracking documents; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

Licensing:
o Valid CNMI Driver's License with appropriate class.
All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

How to Apply: Submit a completed CUC Employment Application, resume, and applicable supporting documents to the CUC Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, Monday through Friday 7:30 am – 4:30 pm (Except Legal Holidays). Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota may submit their documents to their respective CUC Administration office. Application, resume and supporting documents can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org.

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New pact strengthens US-Palau Pacific stewardship

SANTA RITA, Guam—As part of a continued commitment to enhancing maritime governance and promoting regional sovereignty, representatives of the United States and the Republic of Palau signed an expanded bilateral law enforcement agreement on Aug. 23, 2023, on the sidelines of the Joint Heads of Pacific Security conference in Palau.

As part of a continued commitment to enhancing maritime governance and promoting regional sovereignty, representatives of the United States, Rear Adm. Michael Day, and the Republic of Palau, President Surangel S. Whipps Jr., sign an expanded bilateral law enforcement agreement on Aug. 23, 2023, on the sidelines of the Joint Heads of Pacific Security conference in Palau. U.S. EMBASSY

"The United States and the Republic of Palau share common interests and values supporting a free and open Indo-Pacific. This agreement will help us meet our security commitments in Palau by increasing maritime domain awareness and preventing IUU Fishing within Palau's EEZ," said U.S. Embassy Koror's chargé d'affaires Andrew J. McLean.

This significant regional milestone agreement enables the U.S. Coast Guard to enforce regulations at sea in Palau's exclusive economic zone on behalf of Palau without a Palauan officer present.

"This agreement helps Palau monitor our exclusive economic zone, protect against Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated fishing, and deter uninvited vessels from conducting questionable maneuvers within our waters," said Palau President Surangel S. Whipps Jr. "It's these types of partnerships that help us work toward our common goal of peace and prosperity in the region."

This advancement follows the similar agreement signed with the Federated States of Micronesia in October 2022, under which the U.S. Coast Guard has conducted boardings for FSM. Additional recent regional security advancements also include the bilateral defense agreement signed with Papua New Guinea in May 2023, recently ratified by the parliament, which will enable U.S. Coast Guard boarding officers alongside their Papua New Guinea counterparts to conduct boardings in PNG's EEZ for the first time later this year.

Through Operation Rematau, an integral part of Operation Blue Pacific and led by U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam, U.S. Coast Guard personnel actively exercise several of the 12 bilateral maritime law enforcement agreements with Pacific Island Countries annually. These agreements, which include the landmark enhanced shiprider arrangement with FSM, reinforce maritime law enforcement operations, bolster maritime domain awareness, and foster security, safety, sovereignty, and economic prosperity throughout Oceania.

The Republic of Palau, a sovereign nation known for its hospitality, vibrant culture, and stringent marine conservation laws, comprises about 340 islands, islets, and atolls. With approximately 17,000 people, Palau is committed to protecting its rich marine environment, including some of the world's most renowned diving spots. The Palauan economy is mainly based on tourism, alongside an essential fishing industry and small-scale subsistence farming.

"We're thrilled to deepen our partnership with the Republic of Palau, an island nation with a rich history and a strong commitment to protecting their maritime resources," said Capt. Nick Simmons, U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam commander. "This agreement, in alignment with the Pacific Partnership Strategy, significantly strengthens our collective efforts to counter illicit maritime activities in the region and reflects our shared dedication to safeguarding the people of the Pacific. It provides an avenue for our teams, including our proven Fast Response Cutter crews, to increase our support to our partners in Palau."

The shiprider program supports regional coordination and aligns with the Pacific Partnership Strategy, contributing to the U.S. Coast Guard's Operation Blue Pacific and Operation Rematau. The bilateral agreements enacted in the Pacific convey the United States' ongoing investment in protecting shared resources and an interest in maritime safety and security. They also embody the U.S. Coast Guard's unwavering commitment to maritime safety, security, and stewardship in Oceania. They comprise more than 600 members in Hawaii and 300 members based in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

With this historic agreement, the U.S. continues demonstrating an enduring presence in the Pacific, facilitating increased regional stability, security, and resilience for U.S. partners. This unity of effort with Pacific Island Countries, including the collaboration with Palau, amplifies our collective ability to protect resources and maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific for all nations who observe the rule of law. ***(USCG)***

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THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 173

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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EDITORIAL

Sane Republicans, stand up: The first debate of the 2024 cycle laid out a stark choice for GOP voters

Donald Trump wasn't on the stage—the cowardly tyrant had taped a Tucker Carlson interview in which he branded the American left "savage animals" and called his Republican opponents "people that shouldn't even be running for president"—but some of the eight candidates who did face off in the first debate of the 2024 presidential cycle did a decent job channeling him.

The 38-year-old upstart in the Trump mold, bloviating businessman Vivek Ramaswamy, said he'd preemptively pardon the former president, who stands credibly accused in federal and state court of plotting to undermine American democracy. He challenged the notion that the United States should aid Ukraine against Russian aggression, a position where he found support from Ron DeSantis, who tried his best to swagger his way through the show.

Meanwhile, both men leaned into the corrosive line that propelled Trump, that America is being invaded by foreigners threatening our way of life, and both boasted of their attacks on so-called woke culture even as they wage their own wars on free speech.

Trump, DeSantis and Ramaswamy stand at 55%, 14% and 7% in national polls, respectively, with the next closest challenger to their Trumpite candidacies Mike Pence, Nikki Haley and Tim Scott, with 4%, 3% and 3%, respectively. The longer that picture holds, the more it solidifies a deeply depressing picture for one of the two political parties, representing a quarter of voters: Even after his four years in office gave Americans 99 reasons to vote him out, even after he added a coup attempt to the Mount McKinley-high pile, Trump has such a commanding hold over the party that his closest competitors are men who ape him, not those open to charting an even modestly different course.

State polls show a little more life for genuine Trump alternatives. Chris Christie, the rare Republican to understand what a threat to the Republic Donald Trump is, is getting a bit of traction in New Hampshire, and Scott and Haley are viable in their home state of South Carolina. But the overarching picture at this stage is that even if Trump should slip, even if he should wind up behind bars, Republicans appear poised to pick the closest approximation of him rather than someone who looks back at the last eight years of Republican lies, demagoguery and misrule and sees problems worth fixing.

Just as Donald Trump, a superwealthy, tax-cheating exemplar of the American elite, postured as an avenger on behalf of the common man as he sold lower-income white Americans on an empty diet of race and class grievance, Ramaswamy and DeSantis are role-playing. The former is a graduate of Harvard undergrad and Yale Law School, the latter of Yale College and Harvard Law. The former made millions at a hedge fund and as a biotech investor. DeSantis served in the military, then the U.S. House, before becoming Florida's governor.

We are not so naïve to believe that there are enough Repub-

See SANE on Page 9

The danger of 'small town' thinking

By PAUL SWEARENGIN
The Fulcrum

Paul Swearengin is an author, emotional & spiritual well-being coach, podcaster and content creator through his social media presence as Unconventional Pastor Paul. He talks religion and politics at times joined by his wife Ashley, a former elected official and community leader. Find him at Pastor-Paul.com.

Recently, I was taken aback by the need of many to defend country singer Jason Aldean's song "Try That in a Small Town." Some spoke out against the song as a racist celebration of the type of vigilante violence once prevalent throughout the Jim Crow Confederate South. Those defenders took a song that had languished on the ratings charts and drove it swiftly to the top.

However, the song's menacing lyric, "see how far you can get down the road" may have found an answer in the Montgomery, Alabama, boat dock incident - now known euphemistically as the "Alabama Sweet Tea Party." Perhaps you've seen the video of a group of white men from a pontoon boat attacking a Black boating officer. It did not go well for the white boaters as a large number of Black Alabamans were able to get "far down the road" by jumping, sprinting and even swimming to the officer's defense.

For me, this incident, in light of that song and its vigorous defense, reverberated with the biblical concept of those "who live by the sword, die by it." Could it be that when we celebrate the idea of vigilante violence, we may find violence visited upon us? Particularly when we disregard that violence often becomes the only perceived recourse when historically oppressed peoples become fed up with injustice.

At a time when our culture wars include the teaching of American history in schools, it might be worth examining this song and incident as an indicator that we need a robust discussion of wrestling with the worst parts of our history, rather than feeling defensive about them?

This history is very real. My own father grew up in a small Midwestern town the type of which were known as "sundown towns." Each main entrance to that small town had signs warning "'n-word don't let the sun go down on your heels in (name of town.)" The signs implied a threat to "see how far you get down the road" for anyone planning an overnight stay without fitting into the homogenous norm of those who "take care of our own."

Sadly, when we forget such a history - or act defensive to it - we can perpetuate those mindsets even today. Years ago, I was sharing with a friend concerns about decades of poverty and economic division in our home city of Fresno, California.

"I love it here," he responded, "I always tell people that Fresno's a small town with great people who take care of each other" (Note: This was his exact response, I didn't tweak that to parallel with the song.)

I reminded my friend that Fresno actually is a city of more than 500,000 people, not a small town. I also reminded him that, in large part due to racial redlining (historically forbidding people of certain races from purchasing land or living beyond a "red line" drawn on a map) some 350,000 of our citizens live in the southwestern parts of town and have life experiences far different than those who live on the northern end or in our northeastern white-flight suburb.

"I guess my view may be a little small," my friend humbly concluded, admitting his "small town" mentality had caused blindness toward the plight of many of his fellow Fresnans. He is an example of how small town mindsets can insidiously affect a person who is not intentional about resisting it. And the melee in Alabama shows the impact of not.

It seems this all speaks to a need to remember our negative history, right alongside and as prevalent as that we view as glorious. It's important that we don't forget what we're capable of doing when we become hard-hearted and closed down to the stories of others.

For many years, German children were required by law to learn about the Holocaust and to visit a concentration camp memorial. The German people were heeding the warning attributed to former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill that "those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it." Yet many in Europe worry this history is slipping away from younger generations as a growing number of Europeans no longer are aware of this history and a rising numbers of those on each side of the Atlantic who deny its occurrence altogether.

Similar lack of remembrance is happening here in America. I live a mere five blocks from a place where, by executive order, many American citizens were placed behind barbed wire simply for being of Japanese heritage. One of the barracks of that camp stood and was utilized by a local business until just about 15 years ago. Yet many Americans don't know the history pictured in a small memorial on that plot of land (now a traffic filled business district) of American soldiers, home on leave, visiting their families in that camp - people imprisoned as if they were not "our own" even as their offspring risked their lives for our country.

With this in our history, I struggle to understand why those of us in the more comfortable racial, economic, and religious classes aren't more willing to remember and openly discuss our past;

See DANGER on Page 9

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

GOP debate made it clear that cutting humanities from universities is a danger to humankind

By CHARLES MCNULTY
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Bedazzled by the lucrative allures of STEM and the popularity of business degrees, universities have been defunding their humanities programs and transforming themselves into vocational training centers with five-star gyms. Foreign language departments are being eliminated at state universities and history, philosophy and English literature majors are on the chopping block everywhere.

The hue and cry over this benighted movement, in which institutions of higher learning are turning their backs on their fundamental mission, will likely not be enough to stop the forces operating under the cover of budgetary necessity. How can a nation intellectually and morally compete in the 21st century global world with a system of higher education that cares more about magazine rankings than the transmission of wisdom?

The first 2024 Republican presidential primary debate, held Wednesday night in Milwaukee, revealed the moral bankruptcy of an America that no longer values the kind of enlightenment fostered by a liberal arts education. The eight candidates duking it out to play second fiddle to Donald Trump, who skipped the event to pack for his trip to the Fulton County Jail in Atlanta on Thursday and to gloat about his front-runner status, were oblivious to the ironies surrounding them.

Allergic to complexity, they pandered to the partisan lusts of the Republican primary electorate. Incapable of seeing themselves—never mind the world—literally burning around them, these anxious Republican hopefuls adopted ideological positions they couldn't always muster sufficient belief in, performing roles for an audience they feared but were determined, nonetheless, to master.

Asked to raise a hand if they believed that human behavior was causing climate change, they shriveled up onstage, as though they had been told to remove their clothes before the Fox News viewing public. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis defied moderator Martha MacCallum's straightforward request on the grounds that they were "not schoolchildren." He claimed to want to debate the issue but then proceeded to launch into an attack on President Biden's handling of the deadly wildfire in Maui.

The best defense is offense for a politician who doesn't want to divulge what he knows about life-or-death matters. As the leader of a state buffeted by hurricanes and endangered by rising seas, the governor knows that insurance companies are fleeing his state as a lost cause. But knowledge has become the true enemy of the people for a would-be demagogue clinging to Trump's playbook.

Vivek Ramaswamy, the most animatedly pugilistic of the debaters, took the climate question to separate himself from the pack. He wasn't at all chastened by the boos that erupted when he declared, "As the only person on the stage who isn't bought and paid for ... the climate change agenda is a hoax." Quite the contrary. He was goaded to more shameless extremes, announcing that "more people are dying of bad climate change policies than they are of actual climate change."

Perhaps Ramaswamy was equivocating with the audience, secretly recognizing that the failure to recognize the urgency of the crisis is behind the inadequate policies hastening our demise. But equivocation in a country that doesn't care a whit if Shakespeare is still on the syllabus can easily pass unnoticed. And Ramaswamy, in any case, was careful to shore up his far-right bona fides, lest anyone mistake him for an establishment politician still thinly tethered to reality like former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley and South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott, neither of whom is living up to polling expectations.

The discussion around Trump's raft of indictments was carefully contained, but the squirmy spectacle threw into relief what happens when leaders no longer have to worry about their place in history because history itself has been downgraded as a subject. Former Vice President Mike Pence justified the way he defied Trump's pressure campaign to get him to put the president over the Constitution, but his fear of inciting MAGA fury led him basically to explain that God made him do it.

Former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie was outspoken on the issue of Trump's fitness for office. "Someone has to stop normalizing this conduct, OK?" he asserted. But his appeal to reason fell on closed ears. Few in his party wanted anything to do with accountability for a cult hero who has made obstruction of justice a centerpiece of his 2024 platform. (Moderator Bret Baier had to scold the jeering audience for preventing Christie from even making his case.)

Vowing to pardon Trump before he's even been convicted, Ramaswamy pounced on Christie's vulnerable right flank. He charged that Christie's "claim that Donald Trump is motivated by vengeance and grievance would be a lot more credible" if his own campaign "were not based on vengeance and grievance against one man." How can anything but dogma survive in such a forum? Whether the topic was climate change, abortion, aid to Ukraine or Trump's determination to destroy American democracy, the point wasn't to shed light on a complicated public matter but to wield darkness for the sake of political expediency.

Hypocrisy in a primary debate is nothing new, but its flagrancy has reached a calamitous level. How has character come to mean so little in American society? What has gone wrong in our collective education that liars who don't even make a good faith effort to conceal their deceptions can command such an enduring hold on the populace?

Justice, Greek tragedy reminds us, requires a wide-angle view. The political actors onstage in Milwaukee wore their tragic flaws on their sleeves. The blind spots in their vision made Oedipus look like a seer, but it was a willful, manipulative blindness they were engaged in.

In a New York Review of Books essay on C.P. Taylor's play "Good," Jacqueline Rose—who co-directs the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities in London—talks about "the power of fascism to pluck the strings of the unconscious." I was remembering her phrase while watching Ramaswamy attempt to put the Republican primary audience under his spell.

Christie scored one of his best zingers of the night when he compared Ramaswamy to "a guy who sounds like ChatGPT." But how will we recognize the dangers of artificial intelligence or the concomitant perils of fascism if we discard the humanities as inconvenient to power?

The first Republican debate of the season took place in a world where literature, history and philosophy have been set aside as irrelevant. Critical thought was banished, and the pursuit of truth was forced to yield to the confirmation of biases and the promulgation of doctrines.

Universities making decisions about what departments to cut should take the long view before they accelerate this degradation of our nation's capacity to examine, never mind govern, itself.

Charles McNulty is the theater critic of the Los Angeles Times. *He received his doctorate in dramaturgy and dramatic criticism from the Yale School of Drama.*

Some Serious Indictments: Some Sonnet Excitements

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka Pepe Batbon Connolly is a retired educa taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonr tioner who enjoys stargazing.

Here is a sonnet on the historic mugshot No. P011358089, and one on the four trials facing twice impeached, four times indicted former president and current candidate for president, Donald J. Trump. The second sonnet is a political parody of the myth of the Nymphs of the Rhine found in Richard Wagner's Ring Cycle of four operas written in 1857. The Nymphs suffered a " flawed guardianship of the Rhine Gold and the condition (the renunciation of love) through which the gold could be stolen from them and then transformed into a means of power." Götterdämerung means twilight of the gods in German. "It means the total, usually violent, collapse of a society, regime, institution, etc." The parallels and similarities between the myth and the lying Trump legacy and his malignant failed leadership are so ironic and rich I had to write at least one sonnet on it.

PO1135809: A Constipated Con

(Jailhouse Jive For POTUS 45)

08/24/23. Arraigned today, 13 felony counts, in the Fulton County Jail
P01135809 DJT was released after 22 minutes on US $200,000 bail
his historic jailhouse mugshot shows him looking like a constipated con
jailhouse wags and wiseguys on the street called him 'the Bigly Don'
now he's going back on his 2024 US presidential campaign trail
depending that more chocolate Ex Lax and fresh Depends won't fail
his indicted lawyer "Stinky Cheese Bro" wants to have an early trial
while some others of the 18 indicted reflect on that, think, and smile
his defensive motorcade ran back and forth on a blocked city highway
Trump has only one thought about his multiple trials, delay delay delay
" leaving on a jet plane" (his own) he knows full well he'll be back again
to the Atlanta, Georgia courthouse where many other criminals have been
where his multiple RICO counts from District Attorney Fani Willis
have him facing several very serious criminal charges that chill us.

POTUS 45 Dung – Götterdâmerung is Sung

The Nymphs of the Rhine myth is called to mind
As the reign of POTUS 45 gives us a glimpse
Of a tragic Presidential and GOP decline
Of billionaire PACs and sympathetic pimps
A fish rots from the head, fruit falls close to the vine
Trump's Vice President meekly leads fellow wimps
Of the GOP Senate and McCarthy we all opine
Of millions of MAGA biased and bigoted blimps
And then there is the US Supreme Court nine
Who by no means are a bunch of like-minded simps
Gifted by billionaires some of them fly and dine
One whose personal ethics crashes, fails, and limps
With democratic norms Trump can't seem to align
In true Trumpian manner he maligns and whines.

DANGER

From page 8

both the good and the bad. Such discussions could cause us to rise from our seats when we see children of color mistreated at the border or we read about travel bans for particular religious groups and say "we will not repeat our history" and instead demand solutions from our leaders that account for the humanity of all people - even those we see as not "us."

I believe it should be a priority for us, especially if we consider ourselves a great country, to do the work of resisting a small town mindset so we can avoid the blinding insulation of living in a blinding bubble. Would it not be truly honoring our past heritage to demand we be a better people going forward? Could it be that an ongoing, honest assessment of ourselves will make us self-aware and result in us being humanity loving people who don't need to be defensive about our past?

And could the result keep us from any compulsion to repeat old habits of threatening those we don't consider part of our "small town"?

SANE

From page 8

lican voters to buck both Trump and Trumpism decisively. But we have a sliver of hope. If after the first Trump term, Jan. 6 and all that has transpired since, the GOP electorate does nothing to elevate a genuine alternative to his rancid leadership, that sliver will disappear forever.

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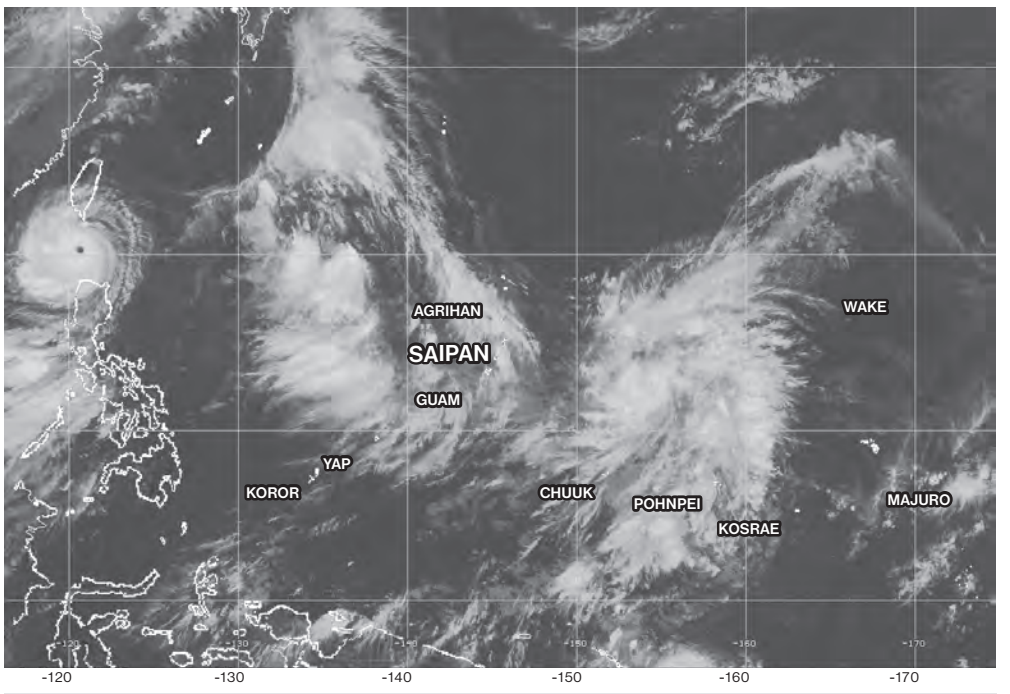
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
A 50 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy	A 50 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy	A 50 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy	A chance of showers. Partly sunny	A chance of showers. Cloudy
87° 79°	86° 80°	87° 80°	85° 80°	84° 82°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:52 AM, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite shows scattered showers and some thunderstorms growing near the Marianas Waters. The Ipan buoy reveals 2 to 3 foot east swell. Computer wave model guidance suggests a west swell of 5 to 7 feet which gives combined seas of 5 to 8 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	83° / 77°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 76°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 76°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:04 AM	6:30 PM
Friday	6:04 AM	6:29 PM
Saturday	6:04 AM	6:28 PM
Sunday	6:04 AM	6:28 PM
Monday	6:04 AM	6:27 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	5:54 AM	6:51 PM
Friday	-	6:56 AM	7:35 PM
Saturday	-	7:55 AM	8:17 PM
Sunday	-	8:53 AM	8:58 PM
Monday	-	9:50 AM	9:41 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	61° / 48°
Beijing	Sunny	82° / 70°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorm	88° / 81°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	86° / 75°
London	Partly Cloudy	70° / 54°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	83° / 66°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	90° / 77°
Melbourne	Showers	55° / 48°
Miami	Thunderstorm	88° / 81°
New York	Partly Cloudy	91° / 79°
Osaka	Thunderstorm	90° / 79°
Paris	Thunderstorm	72° / 55°
Busan	Thunderstorm	84° / 79°
Rome	Sunny	88° / 64°
Salem	Thunderstorm	88° / 71°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	64° / 57°
Seoul	Thunderstorm	82° / 68°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	91° / 77°
Washington, DC	Thunderstorm	93° / 73°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
1:32 AM	Low Tide	1.12
6:49 AM	High Tide	2.22
1:56 PM	Low Tide	-0.25
8:33 PM	High Tide	2.11

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 21, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily
UA156	7:10PM	7:55PM	1, 4

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	1, 3, 4, 5, 7
PR 111	6:55AM	8:55AM	2, 6
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:15PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/703	4:20AM	10:35PM	Daily
7C3403/2305	4:45AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily
OZ626	4:20AM	7:55AM	Daily
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:20AM	6:30AM	1, 4, 5, 7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily
UA112	5:15PM	6:05PM	1, 4

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	2, 3, 5, 6, 7
PR110	11:30PM	5:25AM+1	1, 5
UA184	11:50PM	5:50AM+1	2, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ702/625	12:05PM	2:55AM+1	Daily
UA184/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
7C2306/3406	11:10PM	3:10PM+1	Daily
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
OZ625	9:25PM	2:55AM+1	Daily
7C3404	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35PM	2:20AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

Velma Palacios is named IT&E CNMI executive director

Telecommunications firm IT&E announced yesterday the promotion of Velma M. Palacios to the position of executive director-IT&E CNMI. This promotion recognizes Palacios' exceptional contributions, dedication, and outstanding performance within the organization.

"As executive director, Velma will assume the top leadership role in the CNMI. Her promotion reflects our confidence in her abilities to drive results, provide strategic leadership, and foster a positive and productive work environment. We are confident that Velma will continue to excel in her new role and make valuable contributions to IT&E's continued commitment to our CNMI customers and the community," said IT&E president Jim Oehlerking.

IT&E

Velma M. Palacios has been promoted to the position of executive director-IT&E CNMI.

Palacios joined IT&E in 1999 as an outside plant engineer. Since then, she has held various positions within the company, including project administrator, plant technical services manager, and engineering manager. Her most recent position was director of Network Operations and Engineering. She played a crucial role in Core Wireline Operations in both the CNMI and Guam, including all outside plant engineering, construction, and maintenance. She was also part of the company's Regulatory and Compliance team.

Palacios has a strong desire to serve her community. Her ongoing community involvements include a seat on the board of directors of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, board chairperson for the Kagman Community Health Center, private sector representative and chairperson for the CNMI's State Workforce Development Board, Pacific Century Fellow, and member of the Society of Human resources Management and the SHRM CNMI Chapter.

On the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, Palacios served as board president from 2016 to 2020 and previously was Education Committee chairperson, board secretary and vice president. Her other past community involvements include board member of the Northern Marianas Trade Institute, board member of the Commonwealth Utilities Commission and Brilliant Star School, and Commissioner for the CNMI's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy developed by the CNMI Department of Commerce.

Palacios was the Saipan Chamber of Commerce 2018 Business Person of the Year and a nominee of the 2017 First Hawaiian Bank and Guam Business Magazine Businesswoman of the Year.

Palacios earned her bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Marquette University and Master of Business Administration from Hawaii Pacific University. ***(PR)***

10 drugs targeted for Medicare price negotiations

WASHINGTON (AP)— President Joe Biden touted the potential cost savings of Medicare's first-ever price negotiations for widely used prescription drugs on Tuesday as he struggles to convince Americans that he's improved their lives as he runs for reelection.

Biden

The drugs include the blood thinner Eliquis, diabetes treatment Jardiance and eight other medications. The negotiation process was authorized under the Inflation Reduction Act, which Biden signed last year, capping decades of debate over whether the federal government should be allowed to haggle with pharmaceutical companies.

Any lower prices won't take effect for three years, and the path forward could be further complicated by litigation from drugmakers and heavy criticism from Republicans.

But the effort is a centerpiece of Biden's reelection pitch as the Democrat tries to show Americans he's deserving of a second term because of the work he's doing to lower costs while the country is struggling with inflation. The drug negotiations, like many of Biden's biggest policy moves, will take time to play out, and his challenge is to persuade the public to be patient.

"For all of you out there, I get it, and millions of Americans get it," Biden said at the White House. "I promise you. I'm going to have your back and I'll never stop fighting for you on this issue."

He noted that he got "no help from the other team"—meaning Republicans—when it came to lowering prescription costs.

The drugs on the list announced Tuesday accounted for $3.4 billion in out-of-pocket costs for Medicare patients last year.

The Medicare program paid more than $50 billion for the drugs between June 1, 2022, and May 31, according to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, or CMS.

That includes more than $16 billion on Eliquis, a total that does not count discounts or rebates that are already negotiated for the drug. The drug from Pfizer and Bristol-Myers Squibb treats blood clots in the legs and lungs and reduces the risk of stroke in people with an irregular heartbeat called atrial fibrillation.

The diabetes treatments Jardiance from Eli Lilly and Co. and Boehringer Ingelheim and Januvia from Merck made the list. It also included Amgen's autoimmune disease treatment Enbrel and Entresto from Novartis, which is used to treat heart failure.

Other drugs on the list include AstraZeneca's diabetes and heart failure treatment Farxiga and three drugs from Johnson & Johnson: the blood thinner Xarelto, the blood cancer treatment Imbruvica and it's biggest seller, Stelara, an IV treatment for psoriasis and other inflammatory disorders.

NO TO BABIES AND KIDS

Airline will test an adults-only section

AP

Senior cabin crew member Magdalini Michailidou stands on the gangway prior the first holiday flight of the Corendon Airlines Europe to the Greek destination Rhodos at the airport Erfurt-Weimar in Erfurt, Germany, July 2, 2020.

DALLAS (AP)—One airline plans to find out if solitude-seeking travelers will pay a hefty extra charge to avoid sitting near babies and little kids.

Corendon Airlines says that it will sell an adults-only zone—no one under 16—on flights between Amsterdam and Curacao starting in November.

The Turkish carrier says people traveling without children will get quiet surroundings, and parents won't have to worry that their crying or fidgeting kids will annoy fellow passengers.

Corendon announced last week that it will set aside 93 regular seats and nine extra-legroom seats in the adult zone in the front of its Airbus A350 jets, which have 432 seats in all. A wall or curtain will separate the section from the wailing masses farther back.

The airline said on its website that it will charge passengers an extra reservation fee of 45 euros ($49) for the no-kids zone, rising to 100 euros ($109) for one of the extra-legroom seats.

To answer your next question, a flight from Amsterdam to Curacao usually takes about 10 hours.

Brett Snyder, who runs a travel agency and writes the Cranky Flier blog, said Tuesday that there could be demand for adult seats.

"For a heavy leisure airline like Corendon, which is probably full of families with little kids, I can see the appeal for someone traveling without kids to pay extra to be away from them to have more peace and quiet," Snyder said.

Then again, he added, people in the back of the adult zone might still hear crying, "so it's like the old days when you were in the last row of the non-smoking section but could still taste that smoke."

Scott Keyes, founder of the flight-search site Going, said the Corendon extra fee is low enough to attract plenty of buyers, and the airline benefits in another way.

"New leisure airlines need strong marketing to break through," he said. "Trying something new and generating free press is valuable for an otherwise little-known airline."

Corendon is not the first airline to try a section with no small children.

Scoot, a low-cost airline based in Singapore, sells a section where passengers must be at least 12.

Back in 2012, Malaysia Airlines announced it would not allow anyone under 12 in a 70-seat economy section on the upper deck of its Airbus A380 jets. The airline later retreated, saying that if there were too many families with children and infants to fit in the lower deck, it would find room for them in the adult economy section upstairs.

US consumer confidence wanes with prices still high and signals of a cooling job market

By MATT OTT
AP BUSINESS WRITER

Americans are feeling less confident financially as summer comes to a close and high prices and interest rates weigh on their willingness to spend.

There were also signs Tuesday of cooling in what has been a very resilient U.S. jobs market.

The Conference Board, a business research group, said its consumer confidence index tumbled to 106.1 in August from a revised 114 in July. Analysts were expecting a reading of 116.

August's swoon—which has somewhat mirrored the stock market decline this month—erased gains from June and July.

The index measures both Americans' assessment of current economic conditions and their outlook for the next six months. Both measures saw significant declines in August.

Consumers' view of current conditions fell to 144.8 from 153, and the index for future expectations slid to 80.2 from 88 in July. Readings below 80 for future expectations historically signals a recession within a year.

Consumer spending accounts for around 70% of U.S. economic activity, so economists and investors pay close attention to their mood to gauge how it may affect the broader economy.

Confidence appeared to rebound late in the spring as inflation eased in the face of 11 interest-rate hikes by the Federal Reserve. But this month's downturn reflects consumer anxiety over spending on non-essential goods, particularly if they have to put it on a credit card with an elevated interest rate.

The cost of every day, essential items also has consumers frustrated.

"Write-in responses showed that consumers were once again preoccupied with rising prices in general, and for groceries and gasoline in particular," said Dana Peterson, chief economist at The Conference Board. She said the retreat in consumer confidence was evident across all age groups.

The downturn in spending has showed up in the earnings reports of many high-profile retailers. Target recently reported its first quarterly sales decline in six years earlier this month, dragged down by cautious spending. Home Depot, the nation's largest home improvement retailer, said that sales continue to decline, with a falloff in big-ticket items like appliances and other things that often require financing.

Nation

Idalia predicted to hit Florida as Category 4 with 'catastrophic' storm surge

CEDAR KEY, Fla. (AP)—Florida residents living in vulnerable coastal areas were ordered to pack up and leave as Hurricane Idalia gained steam in the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico, and authorities warned of a "catastrophic storm surge and destructive winds" when the storm moves ashore Wednesday morning.

Idalia grew into a Category 2 system on Tuesday afternoon, with sustained winds of 110 mph (177 kph) by Tuesday night. It was projected to make landfall early Wednesday as a Category 4 storm with winds of at least 130 mph (209 kph) in the lightly populated Big Bend region, where the Florida Panhandle curves into the peninsula. The result could be a big blow to a state still dealing with lingering damage from last year's Hurricane Ian.

The National Weather Service in Tallahassee called Idalia "an unprecedented event" since no major hurricanes on record have ever passed through the bay abutting the Big Bend.

On the island of Cedar Key, Commissioner Sue Colson joined other city officials in packing up documents and electronics at City Hall on Tuesday. She had a message for the almost 900 residents who were under mandatory orders to evacuate. More than a dozen state troopers went door to door warning residents that storm surge could rise as high as 15 feet (4.5 meters).

"One word: Leave," Colson said. "It's not something to discuss."

Gov. Ron DeSantis repeated the warning at Tuesday afternoon news conference.

"You really gotta go now. Now is the time," he said. Earlier, the governor stressed that residents didn't necessarily need to leave the state, but should "get to higher ground in a safe structure."

Not everyone was heeding the warning. Andy Bair, owner of the Island Hotel, said he intended to "babysit" his bed-and-breakfast, which predates the Civil War. The building has not flooded in the almost 20 years he has owned it, not even when Hurricane Hermine flooded the city in 2016.

"Being a caretaker of the oldest building in Cedar Key, I just feel kind of like I need to be here," Bair said. "We've proven time and again that we're not going to wash away. We may be a little uncomfortable for a couple of days, but we'll be OK eventually."

Tolls were waived on highways out of the danger area, shelters were open and hotels prepared to take in evacuees. More than 30,000 utility workers were gathering to make repairs as quickly as possible in the hurricane's wake. About 5,500 National Guard troops were activated.

In Tarpon Springs, a coastal community northwest of Tampa, 60 patients were evacuated from a hospital out of concern that the system could bring a 7-foot (2.1-meter) storm surge.

St. Johns County residents fill sand bags Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023, in Crescent Beach, Fla., as they prepare for the arrival of Hurricane Idalia. AP

Unclear how many in Lahaina lost lives as Hawaii authorities near the end of their search for dead

HONOLULU (AP)—Crews in Hawaii have all but finished searching for victims of the deadliest U.S. wildfire in more than a century, authorities said Tuesday, and it is unclear how many people perished.

Three weeks after the fire devastated Maui's historic seaside community of Lahaina, the count of the dead stands at 115. But an unknown number of people are still missing.

Officials suggested that responders likely have already recovered any remains that are recognizable as such, and they are shifting the response to focus on removing hazardous waste and making the area safe for residents to begin returning.

"We have wrapped up almost completely the search and recovery mission and moving into the next phase," Darryl Oliveira, the interim administrator of the Maui Emergency Management Agency, said at a news conference.

The next phase would be hazardous waste removal conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, he said.

Maui Police Chief John Pelletier said urban search and rescue teams have "completed 100% of their area" but some search activity continues in the ocean off Lahaina.

The FBI is searching 200 yards (183 meters) out along a four-mile (6.4-kilometer) stretch of coastline, but no human remains have been found, he said. There are 110 missing persons reports filed with Maui police, and more than 50 of those remain open cases that are still actively being worked, he said.

Although the initial land search is complete, authorities may also use details from the missing person reports to go over areas again, he added.

"They say, "My loved one was here' and this may be a data point and we can continue," Pelletier said. "In case there was a chance that something needs to be further looked at, we've got archeologists and we're gonna make sure that we can do that so, again, we do this the right way."

He asked for "trust and patience" as officials continue to identify remains and go through lists of the missing.

UNC graduate student kills adviser, police say

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP)—A University of North Carolina graduate student walked into a classroom building, shot his faculty adviser and quickly left, authorities said a day after the attack paralyzed campus as police searched for the gunman.

Qi

Tailei Qi, 34, was charged Tuesday with first-degree murder and having a gun on educational property in Monday's killing of Zijie Yan inside a science building at the state's flagship public university.

Chapel Hill police arrested Qi without force in a residential neighborhood near campus within two hours of the attack, UNC Police Chief Brian James said at a news conference.

Investigators were trying to determine a motive and searching for the gun, James said. He declined to specify where in Caudill Labs Yan was killed, saying officers are still looking at evidence. Qi was already gone when a team of officers reached the building, James said.

Yan was "a beloved colleague, mentor and a friend of so many on our campus and a father to two young children," UNC Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz at the news conference.

On Wednesday afternoon, the school's iconic Bell Tower will ring in honor of Yan's memory and students are encouraged to take a moment of silence, he said. The school also canceled classes until Thursday.

Earlier Tuesday, Qi briefly appeared in Orange County Superior Court in Hillsborough. Judge Sherri Murrell ordered Qi to remain jailed without bond and scheduled his next court date for Sept. 18. After the hearing, Qi bowed to the judge, his Mandarin interpreter, public defender Dana Graves and the guards who took him away in handcuffs.

Graves left court without talking to reporters and did not immediately respond to an email seeking comment.

Yan was an associate professor in the Department of Applied Physical Sciences who had worked for the university since July 2019, Guskiewicz said Tuesday. He led the Yan Research Group, which Qi joined last year, according to the group's UNC webpage.

Yan was a respected and approachable professor and research adviser who was deeply knowledgeable about the field, said Wen Liu, a 2022 graduate who worked in the lab for three years.

ACROSS THE NATION

11 taken to hospital as Delta jetliner hits turbulence near Atlanta airport

ATLANTA (AP)—Eleven people on a Delta Air Lines flight were taken to the hospital on Tuesday after the plane hit turbulence while heading to Atlanta, officials said. Flight 175 had left Milan, Italy, and was about 40 miles (64 kilometers) northeast of Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport when the crew reported severe turbulence, according to the Federal Aviation Administration, which said it will investigate. The Airbus A350 landed safely at the airport shortly before 7 p.m. Eleven passengers and crew members were taken to the hospital, Delta said. It didn't provide details on their injuries or conditions.

Convicted rapist who escaped from Arkansas prison using jet ski in 2022 is captured, authorities say

LEWISBURG, W.Va. (AP)—A convicted rapist who authorities say used a jet ski during an escape from an Arkansas prison last year was arrested Tuesday in West Virginia, the U.S. Marshals Service said. Samuel Paul Hartman, 39, was arrested along with his wife, his mother and his mother's boyfriend at a hotel in Lewisburg, the Marshals Service said in a news release.

The women are accused of helping Hartman escape in August 2022 from the East Arkansas Regional Unit in Brickeys, 96 miles (155 kilometers) east of Little Rock. Hartman was on a work detail in a field near the detention facility when a pickup truck with the women inside approached. Several gunshots were fired at a corrections officer from the waiting vehicle as Hartman ran to it. The vehicle fled to two jet skis staged near the Mississippi River not far from the prison, the statement said.

2 found dead in eastern Washington wildfires identified, more than 350 homes confirmed destroyed

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP)—The men found dead in two wildfires that ignited in eastern Washington earlier this month have been identified, and the number of homes destroyed has been confirmed at more than 350. Carl Grub, 86, died on Aug. 18 near an intersection in Medical Lake west of Spokane in the area of the Gray fire, which started that day, according to a Friday news release from the Spokane County Medical Examiner's Office. Grub's cause and manner of death is still pending. Grub, with his brother, founded The Jensen Memorial Youth Ranch, where he taught kids interested in agriculture how to care for and raise livestock, KREM-TV reported. Earlier this year, the Junior Livestock Show of Spokane had been dedicated to Grub.

127-year-old water main gives way under NYC's Times Square, flooding streets, subways

NEW YORK (AP)—A 127-year-old water main under New York's Times Square gave way early Tuesday, flooding midtown streets and the city's busiest subway station. The 20-inch (half-meter) pipe gave way under 40th Street and Seventh Avenue at 3 a.m., and quickly delivered a wet reminder of the perils of aging infrastructure beneath the city's crowded streets. The rushing water was only a few inches deep on the street, but videos posted on social media showed the flood cascading into the Times Square subway station down stairwells and through ventilation grates. The water turned the trenches that carry the subway tracks into mini rivers and soaked train platforms.

Asia

Conviction, sentence of ex-PM Imran Khan suspended

ISLAMABAD (AP)—A Pakistani appeals court on Tuesday suspended the corruption conviction and three-year prison term of Imran Khan in a legal victory for the hugely popular but embattled former prime minister, his lawyers and court officials said.

Hours after the announcement, the Islamabad High Court in a written verdict said it was granting bail to Khan on the completion of a surety bond of 100,000 Pakistani rupees ($328).

Khan, 70, will be able to run for office in elections currently set for November only if his conviction is set aside.

In Tuesday's ruling, the appeals court only suspended Khan's sentence and conviction, and the same court will decide whether to set aside the conviction at a later date, according to Hashmat Habib, an Islamabad-based legal expert.

But that didn't stop one of Khan's lawyers from claiming a victory for the former premier.

"Imran Khan is again entitled to lead his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party after today's court order," Babar Awan told reporters after the announcement of the decision.

Khan has denied the charges against him, insisting he did not violate any rules.

Khan's detention will continue at least until Wednesday because of his arrest in another case for allegedly revealing official secrets. Khan faces a multitude of other charges brought since his ouster through a no-confidence vote in parliament in April 2022.

Khan lawyer Shoaib Shaheen said the Islamabad High Court issued a brief verbal order before the written verdict. Khan was convicted and sentenced earlier this month by a court that found him guilty of concealing assets after selling state gifts he received while in office.

Earlier this month, Pakistan's Election Commission had disqualified Khan from running for office for five years. Under Pakistan's laws, no convicted person is eligible to lead a party, run in elections, or hold public office.

Khan's spokesman, Zulfiqar Bukhari, in a statement welcomed the court order, hoping the former premier would be freed from the Attock prison in the eastern Punjab province where he has been held since his arrest earlier this month.

India moon rover confirms sulfur and detects several other elements near lunar south pole

NEW DELHI (AP)—India's moon rover confirmed the presence of sulfur and detected several other elements near the lunar south pole as it searches for signs of frozen water nearly a week after its historic moon landing, India's space agency said Tuesday.

The rover's laser-induced spectroscope instrument also detected aluminum, iron, calcium, chromium, titanium, manganese, oxygen and silicon on the lunar surface, the Indian Space Research Organization, or ISRO, said in a post on its website.

The lunar rover had come down a ramp from the lander of India's spacecraft after last Wednesday's touchdown near the moon's south pole. The Chandrayan-3 Rover is expected to conduct experiments over 14 days, the ISRO has said.

The rover "unambiguously confirms the presence of sulfur," ISRO said. It also is searching for signs of frozen water that could help future astronaut missions, as a potential source of drinking water or to make rocket fuel.

The rover also will study the moon's atmosphere and seismic activity, ISRO Chairman S. Somnath said.

On Monday, the rover's route was reprogrammed when it came close to a 4-meter-wide (13-foot-wide) crater. "It's now safely heading on a new path," the ISRO said.

The craft moves at a slow speed of around 10 centimeters (4 inches) per second to minimize shock and damage to the vehicle from the moon's rough terrain.

After a failed attempt to land on the moon in 2019, India last week joined the United States, the Soviet Union and China as only the fourth country to achieve this milestone.

The successful mission showcases India's rising standing as a technology and space powerhouse and dovetails with the image that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is trying to project: an ascendant country asserting its place among the global elite.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Typhoon Saola strengthens as it passes Taiwan on its way to China

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—Typhoon Saola strengthened overnight as it continued its path across the Pacific early Wednesday and headed for China's southern coast. The typhoon was moving northwest with sustained winds of 191 kph (118 mph) and gusts of up to 234 kph (145 mph), according to Taiwan's Central Weather Bureau and is now considered a strong typhoon. The typhoon's eye won't hit Taiwan's mainland, but will hit the island's southern cities with its outer bands. The weather bureau also warned of heavy rain and strong winds in Taiwan's southern cities, and especially southern Pingtung county. The typhoon is currently traveling directly south of Taiwan, in the Bashi Channel, the band of ocean that separates Taiwan and the Philippines.

UN warns that hundreds of thousands in Southeast Asia have been roped into online scams

GENEVA (AP)—The U.N. human rights office says criminal gangs have forced hundreds of thousands of people in Southeast Asia into participating in unlawful online scam operations, including false romantic ploys, bogus investment pitches and illegal gambling schemes. The Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, in a new report, cites "credible sources" that at least 120,000 people in strife-torn Myanmar and roughly 100,000 in Cambodia "may be held in situations where they are forced to carry out online scams." The report sheds new light on cybercrime scams that have become a major issue in Asia, with many of the workers trapped in virtual slavery and forced to participate in scams targeting people over the internet.

World

2 killed in Kyiv; Russia accuses Ukraine of major drone attack

AP

This image made from a social media and and provided by Ostorozhno Novosti shows smoke billowing over the city and a large blaze in Pskov, Russia, on Aug. 29, 2023.

MOSCOW (AP)—A Russian attack on Kyiv killed two people early Wednesday, Ukrainian officials said, while Russia accused Ukraine of launching what appeared to be the biggest drone attack on Russian soil since Moscow sent troops there 18 months ago.

Drones hit an airport in Russia's western Pskov region near the border with Estonia and Latvia, and started a massive fire, the governor and local media reported. More drones were shot down over Oryol, Bryansk, Ryazan, Kaluga and the Moscow region surrounding the Russian capital, according to the Defense Ministry.

Pskov regional Gov. Mikhail Vedernikov ordered all flights to and from the airport in the region's namesake capital canceled Wednesday so the damage could be assessed during daylight.

The airport strike, which was first reported minutes before midnight, damaged four Il-76 transport aircraft, Russia's state news agency Tass reported, citing emergency officials.

Footage and images posted on social media showed smoke billowing over the city of Pskov and a large blaze. Vedernikov said there were no casualties, and the fire has been contained. Unconfirmed media reports said between 10 and 20 drones could have attacked the airport.

WORLD BRIEFS

Female dental assistant in Jamaica charged with kidnapping and killing an 8-year-old girl

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—A female dental assistant in Jamaica was charged with murder and kidnapping after police said she abducted an 8-year-old girl from school and killed her. The woman was arrested roughly two weeks ago but wasn't charged until Monday, nearly three months after the body of Danielle Rowe was found in the town of Portmore, just west of the capital of Kingston, according to Jamaica's Constabulary Force. Police said the woman was the former partner of the girl's father, who is a police officer. The girl was found with her throat slashed in early June and was hospitalized, but she died a couple of days later.

Massive Greek wildfire now in its 11th day is the biggest ever recorded in the EU

ATHENS, Greece (AP)—A massive wildfire was burning unabated in northeastern Greece for the 11th day Tuesday despite the efforts of hundreds of firefighters and a fleet of water-dropping aircraft from Greece and several of its European Union partners. After burning across vast tracts of land, the blaze in the Alexandroupolis and Evros region was mainly concentrated deep in a forest near the border with Turkey, in an area difficult to access. The wildfire, which was blamed for 20 of the 21 wildfire-related deaths in Greece last week, is the biggest in the EU since the European Forest Fire Information System started keeping records in 2000.

Brother and sister killed in shooting in front of a Puerto Rican courthouse

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—A brother and sister were fatally shot Tuesday in front of a courthouse in the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico by a suspect who knew them, authorities said. The unidentified shooter was arrested minutes later at the courthouse in the northern city of Caguas, according to a police statement. The victims were a male civilian and a woman who worked as a security guard for a private company, police on the scene told reporters. The security company did not immediately return a message for comment. The sound of at least seven shots being fired was recorded live and showed a reporter who was preparing for a broadcast fleeing the scene and another man throwing himself on the ground.

6 men killed in ambush in southern Mexico town near Guatemala border known for migrant smuggling

TAPACHULA, Mexico (AP)—Prosecutors in southern Mexico said Tuesday that at least six men were killed in an apparent ambush in a township near the Guatemalan border that is known as a migrant smuggling route. Prosecutors in the southern state of Chiapas said the killings occurred Tuesday along a rural road in the township of Siltepec, about 30 miles (50 kilometers) from the border with Guatemala. The victims all appear to have been riding in the same pickup truck when attackers opened fire on them from the roadside. According to videos posted on social media, most of the victims appeared to be wearing black T-shirts and jeans with short haircuts.

Environment

AS JAPAN RELEASES FUKUSHIMA WASTEWATER INTO THE OCEAN

Pacific Islanders are reminded of a never-ending nuclear legacy

By ANITA HOFSCHNEIDER
Senior Staff Writer, Grist

Danity Laukon was sitting in her bedroom in her two-bedroom flat in Suva, Fiji, when she got the call. It was November 2021, and her dad, more than 1,800 miles away at her home in Majuro in the Marshall Islands, had died after a battle with diabetes.

He was 50 years old.

Diabetes is not an illness that is directly caused by radiation. But Laukon believes that American nuclear testing in the Pacific played a role in his early death.

After years of nuclear bomb detonations in the Marshall Islands, fallout and forced relocations of communities began a ripple effect: Many Indigenous Marshallese people who had relied on subsistence farming and fishing for 4,000 years suddenly couldn't trust the safety of their food, becoming reliant on imported products and unhealthy, non-native processed foods.

And those were the lucky ones. On Utrik atoll, where Laukon's maternal family is from, many residents fell ill from acute radiation sickness.

Now she's worried her community will face even more health risks. On Thursday, the government of Japan began releasing wastewater from the wrecked Fukushima Daichi nuclear plant into the Pacific Ocean and plans to continue to do so gradually for the next 30 years.

Japan is treating the water before it is poured into the sea, but the water will still contain low levels of radioactive contaminants that can't be removed. Japan promises that the levels of contaminants present will be significantly lower than international health standards and has gained the support of a key United Nations agency. But some scientists remain concerned about how little is known about potential long-term effects of the wastewater.

Japanese officials declined to speak on the record about their plans but have publicly outlined an argument that the country is running out of room to store contaminated water from the nuclear power plant and that another earthquake—similar to the quake that damaged the plant—could release the stored water before being treated. The plan now is to treat contaminated water, then dilute it into the Pacific Ocean over the course of three decades in order to more quickly decommission the nuclear facility.

In 2011, a 9.1-magnitude earthquake struck Japan, causing a tsunami that killed more than 19,000 people and knocked out emergency generators to the Fukushima nuclear plant. In the hours after, three nuclear reactors melted down, forcing the evacuation of more than 100,000 people. Radioactive water spilled into the Pacific and was carried east by currents toward the United States. Two and a half years later, radiation from the plant was detected in waters off California, but at levels considered harmless.

In the decade since, Japan has erected more than 1,000 tanks to store more than a million tons of water from Fukushima: rainwater, groundwater, and water pumped into the facility to cool the damaged reactors. Once treated, that water will be poured into the Pacific for the next three decades.

Japanese officials have promised that the levels of contaminants present in the wastewater will be significantly lower than international health standards, and last month, the International Atomic Energy Agency, a United Nations agency that oversees nuclear energy, greenlit the plan when it released a report describing the wastewater as having a "negligible radiological impact on people and the environment."

However, some scientists remain concerned about how little is known about potential long-term effects of that wastewater, while many Indigenous peoples in the Pacific, like Laukon, worry that the move will add an additional burden to the health disparities communities already face. For Laukon, Japan's decision is an extension of a long-running history of using the Pacific as a dumping ground for nuclear waste.

"It's giving us more to deal with," she said. "It feels helpless."

During the Cold War, Britain, France, and the U.S. tested more than 300 nuclear bombs across the Pacific regions of Polynesia and Micronesia as well as in the deserts of Australia. After a detonation in the Marshall Islands, children on Rongelap atoll ate "snow" that fell from the sky that later turned out to be calcium debris from the fallout. Radioactive debris clung to the coconut oil of women's hair.

An angler prepares to fish at Numanouchi port, Iwaki, northeastern Japan, near the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, damaged by a massive March 11, 2011, earthquake and tsunami, on Friday, Aug. 25, 2023. AP

At Fukushima, one concern about the discharge is around tritium, a radioactive isotope produced in nuclear reactors that can't be removed through Japan's treatment process. Japanese officials say that once the wastewater mixes into the ocean one kilometer off of Japan's shores, the amount of tritium present is expected to be well below the World Health Organization's standards for drinking water quality –1,500 becquerels per liter compared with the WHO limit of 10,000 becquerels per liter; levels comparable to those in water released from normally-operating nuclear power plants in China, the United Kingdom and Canada.

Japan says the discharge is safe, but Timothy Mousseau isn't so sure. The biologist and professor at the University of South Carolina and author of an exhaustive review of existing studies on tritium currently awaiting publication.

"The bottom line from my perspective is that (tritium) has been insufficiently studied to be making hard promises about the long-term safety of this kind of release," Mousseau said. "We don't actually really understand what the potential ramifications of a massive point source of tritium will be on the natural environment."

While exposure to tritium through swimming or drinking water isn't a risk, the radioactive isotope can bioaccumulate through the food chain. Studies of mice and rats suggest that ingesting tritium could lead to cancer and fertility problems, Mousseau said, but whether that would happen in humans isn't clear because the radioactive isotope hasn't been studied enough.

"We really don't know whether there will be a significant hazard to humans at the end of the food chain," said Mousseau.

That potential to impact the food chain is a big concern to Robert Richmond, director of the Kewalo Marine Laboratory at the University of Hawai'i and a professor who specializes in marine conservation biology and coral reefs.

Richmond is part of a panel of experts advising the Pacific Islands Forum, the chief diplomatic body representing Pacific island nations, on Japan's plan. In February, he visited Japan to meet with the country's scientists about the release. He left unimpressed by the lack of data they provided regarding the contents of their water tanks and the effectiveness of their treatment system.

"When they say the science is impeccable—no, anything but," he said.

Richmond and his fellow scientists saw red flags in what data did exist including inconsistencies and poorly designed sampling protocols. One of Richmond's colleagues, Kenneth Buesseler, is a marine radiochemist and senior scientist at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.

Buesseler says the water flowing through the plant is exposed to more radiation than cooling water in normally functioning nuclear reactors because it's in direct contact with molten coil. That means the water will need to be treated multiple times to reach the health standards that Japan has promised. He doesn't believe Japan has effectively demonstrated that its treatment system can consistently remove the high levels of dangerous compounds present in the wastewater.

He also doubts that there's an urgent need to get rid of the water and says Japan should consider other viable alternatives. The rush to discharge the water, Richmond said, suggests Japan is choosing the cheapest, most politically expedient method to get rid of the nuclear waste rather than doing what's best for its neighbors and the ocean, which is already stressed from the effects of climate change, plastic pollution and ocean acidification.

"Once you've made a mistake, there's no turning back, and all the monitoring in the world does nothing to protect ecosystems or the people who depend on them," he said. "It simply tells you when you're screwed and that doesn't really do anything."

Pacific opposition to the plan was initially strong, but after Japanese officials carried out a multi-million dollar advertising campaign to sway public opinion including meeting with Pacific leaders, several expressed support, most recently Fiji Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka.

On Twitter on Tuesday, Rabuka called the comparison of Japan's controlled wastewater discharge to historic nuclear testing in the Pacific "fear mongering."

"It's impossible to compare those nuclear tests with the careful discharge of treated wastewater from Fukushima over a period of approximately 30 years," he wrote.

But other leaders, like Vanuatu's foreign minister, remain unconvinced. Sheila Babauta, a former legislator from the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, abbreviated as CNMI, authored a resolution that condemned Japan's plan in 2021. Today, she remains resolute in her opposition.

"I'm deeply concerned for the people of the CNMI and how decisions by major world powers are being made without our knowledge and how that's going to impact our lives today and for future generations," she said.

On Tuesday, Laukon was visiting Honolulu, and woke up to Facebook messages from friends asking her about Japan's plan to release the wastewater that week. What could they do? Could they put out a statement criticizing the plans? Would it make a difference?

It took her a while for the reality to sink in—the fact that what she and others had been campaigning against was actually happening.

"To be honest, it feels helpless to really voice what you want to say because does it matter? Are they listening?" she said. "But it does matter. Whatever we do now will still affect later generations. And that's why I'm worried."

It was hard to put how she felt into words. What could she say that could capture the feeling she had about what she feared, what this big decision that was so far out of her control meant for her people?

She finished composing a poem she had started writing last week in Fiji. It was about a turtle who lays eggs under the full moon, only to realize they won't hatch.

"Under a full moon / I see raindrops / blue water / an island is grieving / in silence," she wrote.

Editor's Note: This story was originally published by Grist. Here is the link to the original story: https://grist.org/indigenous/as-japan-releases-fukushima-wastewater-into-the-ocean-pacific-islanders-are-reminded-of-a-never-ending-nuclear-legacy/

Life & Style

Japan talent agency founder sexually assaulted hundreds—probe

TOKYO (AP)—A team investigating sexual assault allegations by the late founder of a powerful talent agency for boy bands has found the charges credible, calling Tuesday for compensation for the victims and the resignation of the current chief executive.

The three-month probe, which included speaking with 23 victims, concluded that Johnny Kitagawa sexually assaulted and abused boys as far back as the 1950s and targeted at least several hundred people.

The investigative panel said Johnny & Associates must apologize, strengthen compliance measures and educate its ranks about human rights. Julie Keiko Fujishima, the chief executive, must resign for not taking action over the years, according to the special team. Kitagawa died in 2019 and was never charged.

AP

Lawyer and former prosecutor Makoto Hayashi, center, speaks during a news conference in Tokyo Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023.

"The company's coverup led to the sexual abuse continuing unchecked for so long," investigative team leader Makoto Hayashi told reporters in Tokyo. "There were many opportunities to take action."

Critics say what happened at Johnny's, as the Tokyo-based company is known, highlights Japan's lagging awareness about rape, sexual harassment and human rights. Public opinion has often been unsympathetic toward people who say they were targeted by sexual predators.

In the Johnny's case, about a dozen men have come forward in recent months to allege sexual abuse by Kitagawa, the agency's founder, while performing as teens. More people are expected to come forward, the report said.

Fujishima has so far only apologized in a brief online video for "disappointment and worries " over the case. It is unclear whether she will resign.

The company in a statement reiterated its earlier apology and promise to hold a news conference, once it had studied the team's report.

'Breaking Bad' stars reunite on picket line to call for studios to resume negotiations with actors

CULVER CITY, Calif. (AP)—The cast of "Breaking Bad" has reunited to call upon Hollywood studios to resume negotiations with striking screen actors.

"We want you to come back to the table with us," Bryan Cranston said in a plea to the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers outside Sony Pictures Studios on Tuesday.

Cranston was joined by Aaron Paul, Jesse Plemons and other members of the "Breaking Bad" universe in an effort to energize picket lines more than a month after SAG-AFTRA joined striking Hollywood writers.

Both guilds are seeking to address issues brought about by the dominance of streaming services, which have changed all aspects of production and pay in the industry.

"The way things were structured 10 years ago made a lot of sense and it made it more possible for journeymen-type actors, actors in the middle that are working just as a hard or harder," Plemons said.

By its final season, which aired more than a decade ago, "Breaking Bad" was one of the most watched and highest rated cable TV shows ever.

Rapper 50 Cent cancels Phoenix concert due to extreme heat

PHOENIX (AP)—Sweltering heat in Phoenix that has routinely broken records this summer led to yet another canceled concert, with rapper 50 Cent calling the triple-digit temperatures "dangerous."

Rapper 50 Cent said Monday that his scheduled show Tuesday night at Talking Stick Resort Amphitheatre, an outdoor venue in west Phoenix, was postponed because of the sweltering weather.

"I'll be back in Arizona soon! 116 degrees is dangerous for everyone," the rapper, whose real name is Curtis Jackson, wrote on social media.

National Weather Service meteorologists in Phoenix said Monday's high topped off at 117 degrees Fahrenheit (47 degrees Celsius). Tuesday's temperature also is expected to reach 117 degrees, which would break the previous record of 113 degrees (45 degrees Celsius) for Aug. 29, set in 1981.

50 Cent joins the likes of other musicians whose shows have been impacted by the area's scorching temperatures this summer.

In July, heavy metal band Disturbed postponed its concert, saying equipment wouldn't work in metro Phoenix's excessive heat. That outdoor show at the Talking Stick Resort Amphitheatre has been rescheduled for March 2, 2024.

And at country singer Morgan Wallen's July 19 concert in Phoenix, some fans complained on social media that some concession stands at Chase Field ran out of water. Others said they left the venue early because of the hot conditions despite the baseball stadium's retractable roof being closed.

WHILE REPORTING ON A STRING OF ROBBERIES

Chicago TV news crew robbed at gunpoint

CHICAGO (AP)—A Chicago television news crew reporting on a string of robberies ended up robbed themselves after they were accosted at gunpoint by three armed men wearing ski masks.

Spanish-language station Univision Chicago said a reporter and photographer were filming just before 5 a.m. Monday in Chicago's West Town neighborhood when three masked men brandishing firearms robbed them, taking their television camera and other items.

"They were approached with guns and robbed. Mainly it was personal items, and they took a camera," Luis Godinez, vice president of news at Univision Chicago, told the Chicago Tribune.

Godinez said the news crew was filming a story about robberies in the West Town community that was slated to run on the morning news. He said the footage they shot was in the stolen camera, and the story never made it on the air.

Chicago police identified the victims as a 28-year-old man and 42-year-old man. Police said the pair was outside when the three men drove up in a gray sedan and black SUV. After the armed robbers took items from the news crew they fled in their vehicles.

No injuries were reported and no one is in custody, police said.

Teen can't connect with her classmates

DEAR ABBY: I'm a 16-year-old girl who is struggling to have a social life. Since I was a little girl, I have had a problem connecting with kids my own age. I have done better with kids older or younger than me. A lot of times I relate better with teachers than with students. The few friends I had before COVID-19 have vanished into thin air.

When school started, I was part of a new group of "friends," but it didn't last long. The groups in my school are very tight. It's almost impossible to break into an already-existing friend group. While I don't mind being alone, I know I'm missing out. It doesn't help that I don't know how to approach other teens and that I suffer from anxiety that makes me doubt myself when I try.

I also can't express myself clearly because I'm not from this country. English is not my first language, and there are cultural things I can't understand. Do you have any advice so I can approach people easier and maybe make a friend or two?

FRIENDLESS GIRL

DEAR GIRL: This may be something you can talk about with a trusted teacher or school counselor. Because the cliques at your school are difficult to break into, ask what kind of special interest clubs exist on your campus. Is drama offered, or is there a sport you might be interested in that would allow you to mix with others your age?

You don't have to be a star athlete or a great actress in order to enjoy activities such as these. The goal is to expose yourself to others who have a similar interest. And remember, high school may seem like it lasts forever, but it doesn't. Once you have graduated, you WILL have the chance to make many more social contacts on a level playing field.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: "Stacy" and I have been friends for more than 20 years. Ten years ago my husband, children and I moved back to our hometown. At that time, I was afforded the opportunity to be a stay-at-home mom. Stacy has one child and never married, so she had to work. A few years ago, she was in a terrible auto accident. I took care of her afterward and drove her to her medical appointments for six months.

When Stacy was released to return to work, she didn't go, so she was fired—and she has changed for the worse. She is verbally abusive at stores, doctor's offices, restaurant drive-thru windows—you name it. She refused to let me drive, and her driving scared me.

She would call me 20 to 30 times a day, and if I told her I was busy, she would come over anyway. I started having a breakdown. I told her to stop and blocked her, but now she is back at it. I am being stalked. What do I do?

FRIEND GONE WRONG

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR FRIEND: Your friend appears to have become mentally unbalanced. Does she have family? If she does, inform them about what's going on. You have already blocked her on your phone and social media. If she comes over, do not let her in. If necessary, your next step should be to file a police report. If you have reason to think she might become violent or damage your property, you may need to seek a restraining order.

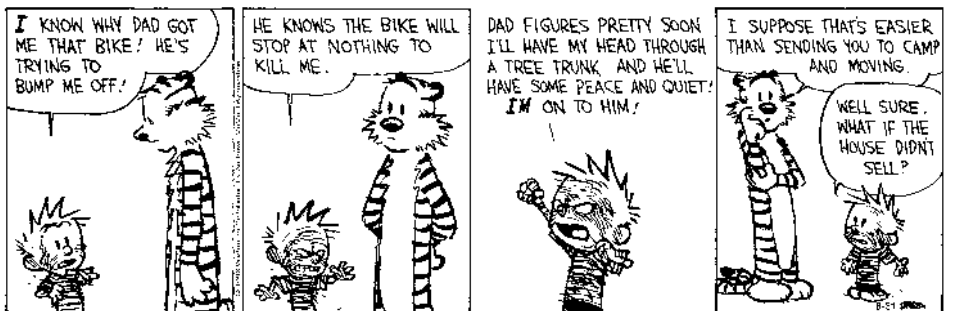
■■■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

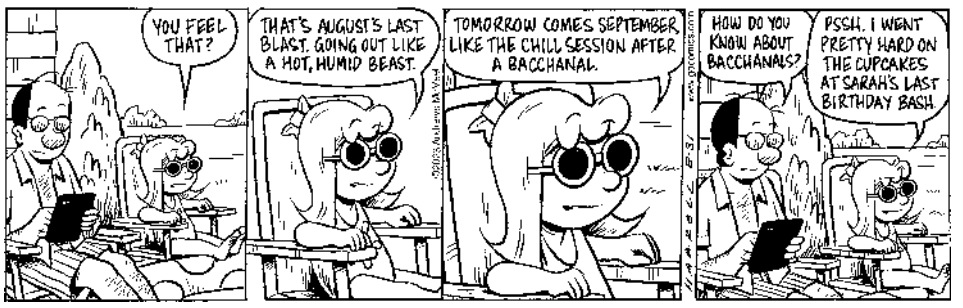

I KNOW WHY DAD GOT ME THAT BIKE! HE'S TRYING TO BUMP ME OFF!
HE KNOWS THE BIKE WILL STOP AT NOTHING TO KILL ME.
DAD FIGURES PRETTY SOON I'LL HAVE MY HEAD THROUGH A TREE TRUNK AND HE'LL HAVE SOME PEACE AND QUIET!
IM ON TO HIM!
I SUPPOSE THAT'S EASIER THAN SENDING YOU TO CAMP AND MOVING.
WELL SURE. WHAT IF THE HOUSE DIDN'T SELL?

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


YOU FEEL THAT?
THAT'S AUGUST'S LAST BLAST. GOING OUT LIKE A HOT, HUMID BEAST.
TOMORROW COMES SEPTEMBER, LIKE THE CHILL SESSION AFTER A BACCHANAL.
HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT BACCHANALS?
PSSH. I WENT PRETTY HARD ON THE CUPCAKES AT SARAH'S LAST BIRTHDAY BASH.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

OUR CENTER FIELDER IS PLAYING TOO FAR IN.
OUR 2ND BASEMAN IS PLAYING TOO FAR OUT.
WHATEVER THE CASE, THEY NEED TO STOP THUMB WRESTLING.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

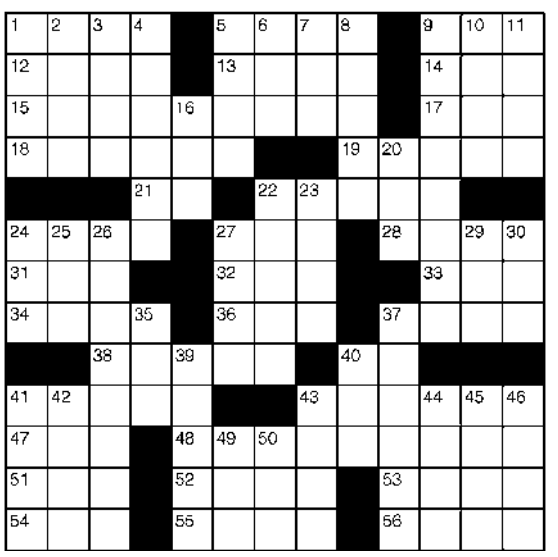
ACROSS
1 Cleanse
5 Sated
9 QB's gains
12 Choir voices
13 Pay to play
14 "— Town"
15 "Think about it"
17 Dos Passos trilogy
18 Tone down
19 Flat floaters
21 Hectic hosp. area
22 Japanese fish dish
24 — Mawr
27 Officer
28 Jason's ship
31 Fair-hiring letters
32 Possessed
33 Navy address
34 Adhesive
36 Egg (Pref.)
37 "Simpsons" bus driver
38 Skateboarder's leap
40 AMA member
41 Ethan of "Boyhood"
43 Noxious atmosphere
47 Copper head?
48 "Don't let me down!"
51 Silent
52 "Toodle-oo!"
53 Formerly, once
54 Sault — Marie
55 Stretches (out)
56 Prescribed amount

DOWN
1 Methods
2 Slugger Moises
3 Ticket half
4 Concealed
5 Confront
6 Half of bi-
7 Old Ford model
8 Lewd glances
9 "I'll go second"
10 White glove discovery
11 Ladies of Spain (Abbr.)
16 Where Lux. is
20 "Eureka!"
22 Italian wine
23 High hairstyle
24 Entreat
25 Seminary subj.
26 "It's payback time!"
27 "Trust Exercise" author Susan
29 "Shoo!"
30 Acapulco gold
35 Antlered animal
37 Gave a speech
39 Gulf in a WWII battle
40 Conk out
41 Scene stealers
42 Border on
43 New corp. hires
44 Houston baseballer, briefly
45 GI dining hall
46 Museo display
49 Flooring wood
50 Salt Lake athlete

Solution time: 24 mins.

S	O	O	T	■	L	O	P	■	U	F	O	S
O	N	N	O	■	F	N	F	■	N	F	M	O
F	U	L	L	S	T	O	P	■	S	L	A	B
A	S	Y	L	U	M	■	S	E	N	T	R	A
■	■	■	S	E	E	■	I	R	A	S	■	■
A	R	F	■	S	C	I	■	S	P	U	R	I
M	E	I	R	■	O	A	F	■	S	R	O	S
P	A	N	E	L	■	B	I	N	■	E	E	K
■	■	A	C	E	D	■	D	O	O	■	■	■
O	B	L	I	G	E	■	E	R	N	E	S	T
R	A	S	P	■	I	L	M	S	T	A	R	■
B	R	A	L	■	L	M	I	■	L	C	I	O
S	K	Y	S	■	R	O	O	■	T	I	I	N

Yesterday's answer 8-31



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Sara Ramirez, 48; Chris Tucker, 52; Zack Ward, 53; Richard Gere, 74.

Happy Birthday: Adjust to make your life less complicated, and make happiness and peace of mind your goals. Take the initiative to get what you want and add valuable people to your circle. Well-thought-out plans and details that address your specific needs will make your life productive and less stressful. Accommodate your needs, and everything else will fall into place. Simplicity will lead to happiness and contentment. Your numbers are 7, 13, 25, 29, 31, 34, 46.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Pay more attention to your health and appearance. Take time to rejuvenate and spend time with someone you love. Mix business with pleasure, adding to your camaraderie with people who share your vision. Romance is in the stars. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Use your imagination to devise a plan that puts you in the spotlight. Speak up and enjoy the banter with people who want to participate in your plans. The input will stimulate your mind and lead to bigger and better ideas. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20):* Put your head down, and don't look up until you feel you have accomplished enough. Getting into a debate or letting someone interfere with your goal is a disservice to you. Go about your business, and don't look back. ✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Make your time and effort count. You can make a difference by directing your energy precisely where it counts. Call on experts if necessary, but don't rule out your experience when getting what you want. Express your desires. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Revise how you handle your money, health and joint ventures. Communication will be the key to getting things done right the first time. Consider how you earn your living and what prospects are available to you. Jump at an opportunity to diversify your skills. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Be open to new beginnings, pursue knowledge and connect to people with something to offer. Use your imagination and expand your mind, interests and friendships. A change of scenery or a reunion will impact how you move forward. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Reach out to someone in need and do your part to make a difference. A chance to earn more money using your skills and experience will become apparent due to outside input. When opportunity knocks, adapt what you can offer to fit the need. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Ask questions, find out what's trending and adjust to ensure you get the most out of what's happening around you. Taking advantage of an opportunity will require strategic timing and attention to detail to avoid costly afterthoughts. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Take note of how others act and what they say, and adjust how you react to ensure you get the most in return. Focus on what you can accomplish and refuse to let anyone use emotional manipulation to throw you off your game. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Organize your space, pass along what you no longer use and simplify your life. An investment opportunity is apparent. Put together a plan that gives you leeway to expand your chance to reduce debt and secure a stronger financial position. Avoid overindulgence. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Sit tight, even if someone prompts you to make a move. Busy yourself taking care of important details that are holding you back. Keep your plans simple and affordable. Don't try to please others; you must be content with your decisions. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Show some bravado. Think outside the box, and you'll attract attention and interest from someone who understands your goal. Trust in yourself, and you'll feel good about your chosen path. Change how you handle money and career moves. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are curious, sensitive and reflective. You are loyal and persistent.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

6				8	1			
			7	4		2	6	
1	7		3	2	6			8
		8		6				3
	4	7		1	2			
			4		5			
			6	5		4		
	8	6						7
		2		7		3		

Difficulty: ★★★ 8/31

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

6	9	8	2	3	4	7	5	1
5	4	2	1	7	8	3	6	9
1	7	3	5	9	6	2	4	8
9	5	1	6	4	7	8	2	3
8	2	6	9	5	3	4	1	7
7	3	4	8	1	2	5	9	6
2	1	7	4	8	9	6	3	5
3	6	9	7	2	5	1	8	4
4	8	5	3	6	1	9	7	2

Difficulty: ★★★ 8/30

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

MOVIE THEATER SNACKS Solution: 9 letters

S	L	L	E	S	W	T	W	J	U	J	U	B	E	S
E	E	I	Y	A	T	E	Z	S	L	L	I	F	E	R
L	M	S	T	K	I	N	Z	B	A	R	S	S	F	L
P	A	E	D	K	R	O	I	N	U	J	E	R	F	C
P	R	S	O	I	R	E	S	M	P	T	I	S	O	H
A	A	O	L	E	K	R	J	O	I	E	T	R	C	E
L	C	C	A	E	E	H	P	B	S	N	A	E	B	E
X	I	M	O	K	Z	C	C	H	I	P	S	P	R	S
S	C	A	C	N	O	T	S	T	R	A	T	P	T	E
O	T	A	R	R	S	Y	E	T	A	A	D	O	S	I
H	R	I	N	T	S	L	T	R	A	P	D	H	O	H
C	S	D	U	D	K	L	I	M	P	K	R	W	E	S
A	E	N	R	R	Y	E	R	X	I	W	T	U	R	U
N	O	E	R	S	F	J	P	I	Z	Z	A	I	O	L
D	N	B	U	G	L	E	S	E	L	T	T	I	K	S

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Aero, Apples, Bars, Beans, Bites, Bugles, Butter, Candy, Caramel, Cheese, Chips, Coffee, Cookie, Crackers, Donuts, Dots, Fries, Fruit, Jelly, Jerky, Jujubes, Junior, KitKat, Milk Duds, Mints, Mix, Nachos, Nerds, Oreos, Pizza, Popcorn, Pretzels, Refills, Sell, Skittles, Slushie, Sno-Cap, Soda, Sour Patch Kids, Sprite, Tarts, Trail, Twix, Water, Whoppers

Yesterday's Answer: Personal

The NEW **Treasury 54** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-856-232-2367)

Dominican Republic, Australia, Italy reach knockout stage of World Cup

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Dominican Republic, Australia and Italy advanced to the knockout stage of the World Cup. Through play Tuesday, 10 teams have reached the final 16 with six more berths to be determined on Wednesday.

The Dominican Republic finished 3-0 in Group A after a 75-67 victory over Angola.

Australia, the Olympic bronze medalist two years ago in Tokyo, defeated Japan 109-89 despite 33 points from American-born Japan center Josh Hawkinson. Australia finished second in Group E behind Germany.

Italy took second place in Group A, defeating the Philippines 90-83. The Philippines, the main host country for the World Cup, needed to beat Italy by a lopsided margin to advance.

Defending champion Spain, the United States, Canada, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania and Montenegro have also advanced.

AP

Silvio De Sousa (22) of Angola shoots the ball against Angel Delgado (12) of the Dominican Republic in the second quarter during the FIBA Basketball World Cup Group A game at Araneta Coliseum on August 29, 2023 in Manila, Philippines.

GROUP E AUSTRALIA 109, JAPAN 89

At Okinawa, Josh Giddey scored 26 points, Xavier Cooks added 24 and Australia (2-1) advanced to the knockout stage by taking second place behind group winner Germany. The Tokyo Olympic bronze medalists entered the World Cup as one of the favorites.

Japan (1-2) disappointed home fans and could not repeat its rousing come-from-behind win on Sunday against Finland. Hawkinson led Japan with 33 points and Yuta Watanabe chipped in with 24.

Hawkinson hit 12 of 13 2-point field goal attempts and was 1 of 3 on 3-pointers.

GROUP A ITALY 90, PHILIPPINES 83

At Manila, Utah Jazz forward Simone Fontecchio had 18 points and six rebounds and Italy advanced after knocking out the Philippines.

Italy (2-1) finished second in the group behind the Dominican Republic. Giampaolo Ricci scored 14 points for Italy, which pulled away in the second quarter to lead 48-39 at halftime and held off a late rally from the Philippines.

Jordan Clarkson had 23 points, seven rebounds and six assists for the Philippines (0-3), which needed to win in a blowout to advance.

GROUP D LITHUANIA 91, MONTENEGRO 71

At Manila, Rokas Jokubaitis had 19 points, five rebounds and six assists, while Mindaugas Kuzminskas had 15 points. Tadas Sedekerskis led his team with 11 rebounds.

The victory gave Lithuania (3-0) first place in the group with Montenegro (2-1) taking second. Both had already advanced and the game decided the top two spots.

Nikola Vucevic led Montenegro with 19 points. Marko Simonovic and Kendrick Perry each had 13 points.

GROUP H CANADA 101, LATVIA 75

At Jakarta, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 19 of his 27 points in the second half as Canada overpowered Latvia. RJ Barrett added 22 points for Canada (3-0), which overcame a 35-23 deficit in the second quarter with a 30-9 run and steadily built its lead.

Lu Dort missed his second straight game because of soreness.

Andrejs Grazulis had 16 points for Latvia (2-1) but Davis Bertans—his team's only NBA player—struggled with just 7 points in 23 minutes.

Latvia captain Dairis Bertans did not play after a hamstring injury sustained against France ended his tournament.

Both teams had already qualified for the next round with Canada winning a group for the first time in its World Cup history.

GROUP A DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 75, ANGOLA 67

At Manila, Andres Feliz hit 17 points and Victor Liz scored 13 and the Dominican Republic (3-0) advanced to the knockout round. The Dominican Republic trailed by one after three quarters but outscored Angola by nine in the final quarter.

Silvia De Sousa led Angola with 19 points. Neither team shot well. Angola made only 2 of 21 3-pointers and the winners were only 5 of 25.

GROUP E GERMANY 101, FINLAND 75

At Okinawa, Dennis Schroder and Isaac Bonga led Germany (3-0) with 15 points each, and Johannes Theimann added 13. Germany had already advanced to the second round and Finland (0-3) had already been eliminated from contention.

Olivier Nkamhoua had 14 points for the Finns and Lauri Markkanen and Ilari Seppala added 12.

GROUP D EGYPT 100, MEXICO 72

At Manila, playmaker Ehab Amin had 22 points and 10 assists as Egypt earned a consolation win over Mexico. Center Patrick Gardner added 20 points for Egypt (1-2), which extended an early 14-point lead to a 59-35 advantage at the half.

Pako Cruz and Joshua Ibarra each scored 21 points for Mexico (0-3), which was 6 of 23 on 3-pointers.

Both teams had already been eliminated from contention for the round of 16.

GROUP H FRANCE 85, LEBANON 79

At Jakarta, Guerschon Yabusele had 18 points and teammate Evan Fournier had 17 as France (1-2) salvaged a victory in the tournament. France won the Olympic silver medal two years ago in Tokyo and was probably the most disappointing team in the World Cup.

Minnesota Timberwolves center Rudy Gobert did not play because of an ankle injury.

Wael Arakji had 29 points for Lebanon (0-3), which lost its opening two games by an average of 47 points.

Both teams had already been eliminated from contention for the knockout round.

Basketball World Cup 2023: How to watch, who's playing, who's favored and more

The final six slots in the second round will be awarded Wednesday in the Basketball World Cup with those teams set to join 10 others still in contention for the Naismith Trophy.

In Group B, where two slots remain unfilled, Serbia is in control, with Puerto Rico and South Sudan tied for second and China needing a miracle.

Group C has one slot left and it'll go to the winner of the Greece-New Zealand game.

Group F has two slots left; Slovenia needs to avoid a loss by 24 or more points to Cape Verde to get one. Cape Verde needs a giant upset to advance; Georgia and Venezuela also are alive.

And in Group G, one spot remains and it'll be claimed by the Brazil-Ivory Coast winner.

SCHEDULE

Opening group-stage play ends Wednesday with eight more games. Among them: The U.S. Round 1 finale against Jordan. Game schedules for Thursday through Sunday won't be completed until Wednesday.

The Wednesday slate:

Group B (at Manila): South Sudan (1-1) vs. Serbia (2-0), China (0-2) vs. Puerto Rico (1-1)

Group C (at Manila): U.S. (2-0) vs. Jordan (0-2), Greece (1-1) vs. New Zealand (1-1)

Group F (at Okinawa): Georgia (1-1) vs. Venezuela (0-2), Slovenia (2-0) vs. Cape Verde (1-1)

Group G (at Jakarta): Ivory Coast (1-1) vs. Brazil (1-1), Iran (0-2) vs. Spain (2-0)

HOW TO WATCH THE BASKETBALL WORLD CUP

In the U.S.: The next U.S. game (Wednesday) will be on ESPN2. It begins at 4:40 a.m. Eastern. No television plan for U.S. games after Wednesday has been announced; the Americans will play Montenegro on Friday and Lithuania on Sunday in Round 2.

AP

Spain forward Juancho Hernangomez battles for a loose ball against Brazil forward Leonardo Meindl during the Basketball World Cup group G match between Spain and Brazil at the Indonesia Arena stadium in Jakarta, Indonesia, Monday, Aug. 28, 2023.

Giants' Cobb loses no-hit bid, settles for 1-hit, 6-1 win over Reds

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Alex Cobb came within one out of a no-hitter before Spencer Steer doubled with two outs in the ninth inning of the San Francisco Giants' 6-1 win over the Cincinnati Reds on Tuesday night.

Cobb dazzled to shut down Cincinnati before Steer's double provided the Reds' only run, coming so close to the majors' fifth no-hitter this year.

Center fielder Austin Slater had made the defensive play of the game when he chased down a shallow fly ball by Will Benson with a diving catch in left-center to end the eighth.

The 35-year-old right-hander just missed tossing San Francisco's first no-hitter since Chris Heston on June 9, 2015, at the Mets.

After getting Noelvi Marte's first-pitch flyout to start the ninth, Cobb (7-5) issued a one-out walk to Nick Senzel before another fly to right by TJ Friedl. Then Steer came through with an opposite-field hit.

A run scored on the double, and Cobb threw a called third strike past rookie Elly De La Cruz on his career-high 131st pitch for his eighth strikeout.

Senzel was credited with a single in the third inning on a two-hopper that third baseman Casey Schmitt snagged with a backhand grab. The rookie's throw from foul territory was high and pulled a leaping J.D. Davis off the first-base bag. Official scorer Chris Thoms originally called the play a hit, then changed it to an error several minutes later.

Patrick Bailey hit a two-run homer to help Cobb win for the first time in nine starts since July 5. The Giants went ahead in the second on a balk then Luis Matos delivered an RBI double to back Cobb.

ATHLETICS 3, MARINERS 1

SEATTLE (AP)—Seattle's two-day stay alone atop the AL West ended in a loss to major league-worst Oakland, which built an early lead on home runs by Seth Brown and Shea Langeliers and beat the Mariners for the first time in nine games this season.

Seattle had won 12 of its previous 13 games, turning a 7 1/2-game deficit into a one-game lead over Texas. The Rangers won 2-1 at the New York Mets, matching the Mariners at 75-57. Houston is a percentage point back at 76-58.

Star outfielder Julio Rodríguez was scratched of a pinch nerve in his left foot that left him day to day, and starter pitcher George Kirby was scratched before the game because of illness and replaced by Luke Weaver (2-5). First baseman Ty France left after two innings with a bruised left thumb sustained on a pickoff.

Sean Newcomb (1-0), the third of six A's pitchers, struck out four in 1 2/3 innings for his first win with Oakland. Trevor May got his 15th save in 18 chances, finishing a four-hitter.

DODGERS 9, DIAMONDBACKS 1

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Mookie Betts hit his career-best 36th home run, David Peralta went 3 for 4 and drove in a pair of runs and Los Angeles won its fourth straight home game, beating Arizona.

The Dodgers pounded out 16 hits while improving to 23-4 in August. Jason Heyward was 3 for 4 with two RBIs, and Chris Taylor was 3 for 3 with an RBI and a run. Will Smith also homered.

Clayton Kershaw (12-4) allowed one run and three hits in five innings, struck out five and walked three. He tied Don Drysdale (209) for second on the franchise wins list.

Merrill Kelly (10-6) gave up seven runs and 12 hits in five innings, struck out one and walked three. Corbin Carroll led off the fifth with a homer for Arizona.

YANKEES 4, TIGERS 2

DETROIT (AP)—New York won consecutive games for the first time in four weeks, beating Detroit as Gleyber Torres homered for the second straight game.

Kyle Higashioka and Anthony Volpe also homered for the Yankees, who had not won back-to-back games since Aug, 2 against Tampa Bay and the next day against Houston. New York has won consecutive road games for the first time since June 28-29 at major league-worst Oakland.

Last-place New York (64-68), in danger of ending its streak of 30 consecutive winning seasons, has two chances against the Tigers to end its run of 10 winless series since a three-game sweep of Kansas City from July 21-23.

Detroit (59-73) has lost four straight.

Jhony Brito (5-6) gave up two hits in 3 1/3 shutout innings for the win. Tarik Skubal (3-3) allowed three runs, two earned, four hits and two walks while striking out nine in six innings in the loss.

CUBS 1, BREWERS 0

CHICAGO (AP)—Justin Steele struck out eight in six innings, shaking off a comebacker that hit him on his left leg, and Chicago snapped Milwaukee's nine-game winning streak.

Steele (15-3) allowed six hits and walked one, improving to 6-0 with a 3.09 ERA in his last eight starts. Chicago (70-62) pulled within four games of NL Central-leading Milwaukee (74-58).

Steele was struck near his left knee by Victor Caratini's one-out liner in the second but stayed in the game, drawing a cheer from the Wrigley Field crowd of 33,294.

AP

San Francisco Giants pitcher Alex Cobb throws to a Cincinnati Reds batter during the first inning of a baseball game Tuesday, Aug. 29, 2023, in San Francisco.

Corbin Burnes (9-7) also was terrific, striking out seven in seven innings for Milwaukee, which had seven hits and went 0 for 5 with runners in scoring position in their first loss since Aug. 17. It was the team's longest winning streak since an 11-game run in 2021.

BRAVES 3, ROCKIES 1

DENVER (AP)—Marcell Ozuna hit his 30th homer, Charlie Morton threw six innings of one-run ball and Atlanta beat Colorado for its 16th win in 21 games.

Major league-best Atlanta improved to 86-45, including 6-0 against the Rockies with a 57-17 run margin. Colorado is an NL-worst 49-83, assured of its fifth straight losing season. The Rockies have lost eight of nine overall.

Ozuna hit a solo drive in the second off Peter Lambert (3-5), and added an RBI single in the fifth. Sean Murphy had an RBI single in the second.

Morton (14-10) allowed three hits, struck out eight and walked one. Raisel Iglesias pitched a perfect ninth for his 26th save in 28 chances.

Ronald Acuña Jr. went 2 for 5 for his major league-leading 57th multi-hit game this season as Atlanta outhit Colorado 15-3 but stranded 12 runners.

PHILLIES 12, ANGELS 7

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Alec Bohm followed an intentional walk to Bryce Harper with a go-ahead three-run homer, Harper hit career home run No. 299 and Philadelphia beat Los Angeles for its fifth straight win.

Shohei Ohtani had three hits and knocked in two runs for an Angels team that reportedly put at least six players on waivers and seemingly surrendered any shot at salvaging the season.

Kyle Schwarber hit his 37th homer of the season, Bryson Stott added a two-run homer and Trea Turner hit a solo shot for the Phillies, who hold the top spot in the NL wild-card standings. Michael Lorenzen (8-8) struck out five in five innings and won for the first time since his Aug. 9 no-hitter.

Luis Rengifo homered twice and Randal Grichuk went deep for Los Angeles. Tyler Anderson (5-6) took the loss as the Angels lost for the seventh time in nine games.

RANGERS 2, METS 1

NEW YORK (AP)—Mitch Garver homered to snap a scoreless tie in the seventh inning and Texas emerged from a slump and beat New York.

Ezequiel Duran had an RBI single and Andrew Heaney had seven strikeouts in 5 1/3 shutout innings for the Rangers, who began the day a game behind AL West-leading Seattle. Chris Stratton (2-1) picked up his first win for Texas since being acquired from St. Louis in a July 30 trade.

Mark Vientos hit a two-run homer in the ninth for the last-place Mets (60-73). Drew Smith (4-5) picked up the loss as New York wasted six scoreless innings from José Quintana and lost for the sixth time in seven games.

NATIONALS 5, BLUE JAYS 4

TORONTO (AP)—Keibert Ruiz hit a three-run home run, Carter Kieboom had a two-run drive and Washington dropped Toronto 3 1/2 games behind Houston for the final AL wild card.

Washington's Jacob Young got his first major league hit, a bunt single in the seventh and threw a runner out at the plate to end the eighth.

Washington (62-71) is 17-9 in August and moved two games ahead of the last-place New York Mets in the NL East.

Rookie Davis Schneider homered for Toronto, which has lost five of seven.

Washington left-hander MacKenzie Gore (7-10) allowed one run and six hits in five innings to win for the first time in six starts since July 23. Kyle Finnegan picked up his 25th save in 32 chances.

RAYS 11, MARLINS 2

MIAMI (AP)—Randy Arozarena, Josh Lowe and Isaac Paredes homered as Tampa rallied from two early deficits and beat Miami.

José Siri hit a go-ahead two-run double in the sixth inning and Yandy Díaz added two singles for the Rays, who trail AL-leading Baltimore by 2 1/2 games in the East Division and maintained their 5 1/2-game lead in the race for the AL's top wild-card spot.

Miami slugger Jorge Soler left the game in the seventh inning due to right hip tightness. Soler, who has 35 homers this season, swung at a pitch from Tampa Bay reliever Erasmo Ramírez and stepped away from the plate.

Aaron Civale (7-3) overcame a 32-pitch first inning and worked five frames of two-run ball, allowing seven hits and striking out five.

Marlins starter Sandy Alcantara (6-12) gave up four runs, seven hits, walked two and struck out four in 5 2/3 innings for the Marlins (66-66), who are 13-27 since the All-Star break. Jazz Chisholm Jr. hit a solo homer.

ORIOLES 9, WHITE SOX 3

BALTIMORE (AP)—Anthony Santander hit a go-ahead three-run double in the seventh inning, and AL-best Baltimore beat Chicago and matched its victory total from last season.

Baltimore (83-49), which has won nine of 11, remained 2 1/2 games ahead of Tampa Bay in the AL East. The Orioles went 83-79 in 2022, their first winning season since 2016.

Lenyn Sosa hit his third homer in five games for Chicago (52-81), which has lost 12 of 17. Aaron Bummer (4-3) took the loss.

Danny Coulombe (4-1) picked up the victory.

ASTROS 6, RED SOX 2

BOSTON (AP)—Alex Bregman and Yordan Alvarez hit back-to-back homer runs in the first inning and Houston beat Boston for its fourth straight win.

Mauricio Dubón added a two-run double in the sixth for the Astros, who kept pace in a tight race for the AL West after entering the night one game behind division-leading Seattle. The Astros opened a 3 1/2-game lead over Toronto for the final AL wild card spot.

J.P. France (10-5) pitched 5 2/3 innings, holding Boston to two runs on five hits with one walk and three strikeouts.

Adam Duvall homered for Boston, which has lost four of five and moved a step closer to being knocked out of playoff contention with 29 games remaining.

Brayan Bello (10-8) pitched 4 2/3 innings, allowing three runs—two of them earned—on four hits with two walks and two strikeouts.

GUARDIANS 4, TWINS 2

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Cleveland overcame an early exit from starting pitcher Gavin Williams caused by knee soreness, taking a three-run lead by the fourth inning and beating AL Central-leading Minnesota.

Minnesota, which leads second-place Cleveland by six games, went 0 for 9 with runners in scoring position and stranded three runners on third base. The Twins' Royce Lewis hit a solo homer in the fourth following grand slams in his previous two games.

Williams retired Lewis on a bases-loaded popup in the first, then was replaced by Hunter Gaddis (2-1), who allowed one run over three innings.

Emmanuel Clase allowed Michael A. Taylor's one-out homer in the ninth before getting his AL-leading 35th save in 44 chances. Taylor's home run was his career-high 20th.

Bo Naylor homered in consecutive games for the first time in his major league career, putting Cleveland ahead with a solo drive in the second off Pablo López (9-7).

CARDINALS 6, PADRES 5, 10 INNINGS

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Willson Contreras homered twice, pinch-hitter Tommy Edman singled in the deciding run in the 10th inning and St. Louis snapped a four-game skid.

Edman slammed the first pitch from Josh Hader (0-2) to left field with one out to bring in Maysn Winn. Richie Palacios set up the winning run with a two-strike bunt to move Winn to third.

JoJo Romero (4-1) struck out two batters in the 10th.

Luis Campusano homered for San Diego, which has lost four of five to fall to 7-16 in August. The Padres are 0-11 in extra-inning games.

Matthew Batten had four hits for San Diego. Ha-Seong Kim had two hits and reached base three times.

PIRATES 6, ROYALS 3

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Ke'Bryan Hayes hit a two-run homer with two out in the eighth inning, helping rally Pittsburgh past Kansas City.

Hayes hit his 11th homer of the season 424 feet to left-center to erase a one-run deficit. In the ninth inning, Liover Peguero added a three-run homer and Jack Suwinski scored on a Kansas City error.

The Pirates won the series opener 5-0 on Monday and will try to win three in a row on Wednesday for only second time since the All-Star break. Pittsburgh hasn't swept a series since June 27-29 against San Diego.

Luis Ortiz (3-4) allowed just one run on three hits in five innings of relief to get the victory.

Carlos Hernandez (1-9), one of five Kansas City pitchers, gave up the home run to Hayes and took the loss.

By LEIGH GASES
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U15 soccer team in China for EAFF championship

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The NMI U15 Men's National Soccer Team left early Tuesday morning for the FIFA Forward Developmental Programme EAFF U15 Men's Championship in Qingdao, China, which is scheduled from Sept. 1 to 8.

The NMI U15 Men's National Soccer Team left early Tuesday morning for the FIFA Forward Developmental Programme EAFF U15 Men's Championship 2023 in Qingdao, China.

The championship is scheduled from Sept. 1 to 8.

The team is in Group A and will face off against Mongolia on Sept. 1. They will then take on Macau on Sept. 2, then South Korea on Sept. 3, and finally square off against China on Sept. 4.

Head coach Michiteru Mita said that more than half of the players will be playing in their first off-island and international tournament.

With that said, "it is very important for them to learn to adapt quickly into a different environment and have good preparation on and off the pitch. The coaching staff are guiding players [on] how to prepare for the game, not only technically but also physically and mentally."

He added that the players are looking forward to the learning experiences and they are all doing well as they prepare for the first match.

Team manager Mikky Vargas said the team had a light training session on Tuesday at the Qingdao Citizen Fitness Center Pitch 1, a stadium with a maximum capacity of 60,000 spectators. The team ended the night with a short meeting to recap all that they've learned about the importance of conditioning before the tournament.

The U15 team is made up of Terrel Kileleman-Hix, Taiga Namai-Scoggins, Aiden Camacho, Jayson Tagabuel, Michael Miller, Arstin Tagabuel, Mark Costales, Chan Woong Yeom, Chan Seo Yeom, Paul Lizama, Rooney Gil, Akoni Matsumoto, Bennet Haro, Bennetton Haro, Gaius Ranada, Yutaka Kadokura, Nolan Ngewakl, Moshe Sikkel, Kian Estolas, and Edward Arriola III.

Accompanying them are Mita, assistant coach Jireh Yobech, assistant coach Konomi Suzuki, Vargas, assistant team manager Khristelle Itaas, and physical therapist Hazel Mabasa.

BILLIE

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slippery, and not tacky either. "The weather for the first heat was really hot but also cloudy too. It started sprinkling at first, then slightly raining. For the second heat, it rained really heavily, which made the track slippery and muddy, but when it came to my race, it was tacky. The track was perfect, I had a good grip on the track which helped me," she added.

Pangelinan, who attributes her interest in the sport to her father, Glen Pangelinan, rode her Honda 150crf, which she's had for two seasons. She said she will definitely be back next season to defend her red plate.

She thanked her brother, Corry Pangelinan, for helping her get to where she is today, as well as her coach, Ellery Cruz. She also thanked her friends and family for coming out to the track to support the Marianas Racing Association riders. "I would like to thank my team's sponsors, Inas Kitchen, Pokka, MarPac, YCO TrueValue, and Marianas Native. I would like to thank the Marianas Racing Association for another great season! And I'd like to thank my aunty Marilyn, aunty Ote, and uncle Tiny for the support as well," she added.

Pangelinan, who's been in the sport for three years now, dedicated her win to her family; her family in Sacramento, California; to all the girls on island; along with Ferrer—who she said has really improved since he started racing. "He's gotten far into the sport and he has made me so proud for how much he has accomplished!" said Pangelinan.

In other results, Elleayah Cruz swept the Mini I Class with 50 points; in the Peewee 1 Class Bentley Koshiro swept it as well with 50 points; and Anella Igitol only completed heat 1 of the Mini ATV class for 25 points.

Results of the other classes will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune.*

BRAVES

From page 20

after they scored two runs via Travon Manglona and Reddick Guerrero, but the Toros were on their heels as Leighton Tenorio and Caleb Cabrera scored two runs as well to take back the lead, 6-5.

The Comets scored one run in the third, followed by two runs in the fifth to tie the game up, 8-8. However, the Toros' Cabrera and Ben Lizama scored two crucial runs in their last at-bat, which was enough to secure the last finals spot, as the Toros came up short by just one run.

If the weather permits, the Braves and Toros are set to compete in the final round of the tourney at 9:30am.

A FULL DECADE AFTER HER FIRST WIN

Simone Biles wins a record 8th US Gymnastics title

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP)—Simone Biles is not going to explain herself. Part of this is by design. Part of this is because she simply can't.

When the gymnastics star is at her best, as she was on Sunday night while winning her record eighth U.S. championship, she feels like she's in a "fever dream." It's not autopilot exactly. It's more of a vibe. A flow.

It's in those moments that the doubts that still plague her almost daily even now, a decade into a run of unprecedented excellence, fade away.

There is no thinking. No overanalyzing. No " twisties." All of it recedes into the background. Her coach Laurent Landi calls it a skill. Biles, even at 26, won't go that far. Maybe because she simply doesn't want to.

She spent a long time, far too long, getting caught up in her head. She's intent on not doing it this around.

So yeah, she was smiling midway through a floor routine that made almost every other competitor on the floor stop what they were doing to watch and drew a standing ovation from a portion of the sellout SAP Center crowd. No, she can't explain why. When her coaches told her she'd nailed every tumbling pass, she was clueless.

CNMI

From page 20

in the 50m and 100m freestyle, 50m butterfly, and 50m breaststroke.

Sikkel said yesterday that their training is going well. "The swimmers are excited to travel to Israel and put their best performance on the clock. Morale is great. It is not every day you get to travel to Israel to represent the CNMI," he said.

As for expectations of the three, he said, "I expect all three swimmers to swim at least several personal bests. It is a bit of a change to go from a 25-yard pool to a 50m pool, it feels endless." But, he said, they will have a few days in the pool prior to competition to get used to it.

For this World Championship, Sikkel said they've only been swimming in pools, but preparations for the upcoming 2023 Pacific Games will also incorporate ocean swimming.

He said the swimmers typically log about 4,500m in each practice.

Seventeen-year-old Pajarillaga feels confident and excited heading into the championships. "Thinking about being there makes me even more nervous, while making sure I keep a positive mindset. I would say I am mentally preparing by not really worrying about it and making sure I don't think negatively. I am physically preparing by going to practice almost every day, and making sure I keep what I have been practicing the same," he said.

Sikkel thanks the World Aquatics and NMISF for their trip to Israel.

In the 8th FINA Junior World Championships last year in Peru, Thompson recorded her personal best in the women's 100 backstroke with a time of 01:24.17, reaching the 50m halfway point at 39.54 and placing third in heat 1. She also swam a personal best in the women's 100 freestyle at 01:09.45.

The Dominican Republic, Australia and Italy reach the knockout stage of basketball's World Cup.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Giants' Alex Cobb loses no-hit bid with 2 outs in the 9th, settles for 1-hit, 6-1 win over Reds.

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Billie reclaims Mini II Class with sweep

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Billie Inabo Pangelinan fought to the finish to reclaim the Mini II Class with a sweep in the last race of the Marianas Racing Association season—the August 2023 Monster Energy Point Series Race at the Cowtown Race Track last Sunday.

Although still recovering from a surgery last June, the 14-year-old tore through the track for a perfect 50-point win alongside rival and July winner, T.J. Ferrer, who took second place this time around with 44 points. Nanako Celis completed the Top 3 with 40 points.

When asked about the close race, Pangelinan said, "I feel really relieved that I've placed on top! It was definitely a challenge with TJ on the second heat! It was surely a good comeback after having surgery."

When asked what made her push through with the race despite her surgery, Pangelinan said she knew she was able to race and that she just had to be extra cautious.

She said this was her last chance to get back the red plate and defend it and that fighting neck-and-neck against Ferrer made the race really exciting.

As for the race track itself, the Saipan Southern High School freshman said it was in good condition—not too dry, not too

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ANDO AGULTO

Billie Inabo Pangelinan gets some air time aboard her Honda 150crf and swept the Mini II Class during the last race of the Marianas Racing Association season in the August 2023 Monster Energy Point Series Race at the Cowtown Race Track last Sunday.

Braves, Toros to face off in U12 baseball finals

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The final stage is set for the Saipan Baseball League U12 Baseball Tournament, as the No. 1 seed Braves and Toros won their semifinals games last Saturday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan softball field in Susupe.

Braves' pitching staff pitched a four-inning shutout game for an 11-0 win over the Blue Jays to take the first finals spot in the tourney.

Aiken Norita of the Braves pitched an incredible game as he registered 12 strikeouts—with the Blue Jays' missing each swing of his well-placed throws.

Norita's offense backed him up, as well as five runs in the first inning from the top of the line up to the middle of the order for an early 5-0 lead. Dayton and Damian Marchadesch again scored a run each in the second, and Kayden Lizama added another run of his own for an 8-0 game.

At this point, the Blue Jays had just put one batter on base from a walk to Napu Reyes, but the Blue Jays' bats were just not making contact throughout the game.

The Braves' Lizama then scored his third run of the game in the third inning, followed by another run by Dylan Barcinas for a wider 10-0 lead. One more run came in the last inning for the Braves and it was more than enough for the win, as the Blue Jays ended the game scoreless.

In the second game, the Toros defeated the Comets in a close 10-9 final.

The Comets came up short in their last at-bat at the bottom of the last inning as they only brought in one run.

It was back-and-forth throughout the game as four runs were made by the Toros, and three runs came in for the Comets. The Comets then took a one-run lead in the second

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LEIGH GASES

Braves pitcher Aiken Norita pitched a 12-strikeout, 11-0, shutout win against the Blue Jays in their semifinals game of the Saipan Baseball League U12 Baseball Tournament last Saturday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan softball field in Susupe.

LEIGH GASES

Blue Jays' Treat Kaipat swings and misses during his at-bat in their semifinal game against the Braves in the Saipan Baseball League U12 Baseball Tournament last Saturday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan softball field in Susupe..

CNMI swimmers off to Israel finals

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The CNMI national junior swimming team is leaving today for the 9th FINA Junior World Championships in Netanya, Israel.

Joining junior swimmers Taiyo Akimaru, Kean Pajarillaga, and Jinie Thompson for the Sept. 5-9 meet is national head coach Richard Sikkel.

Akimaru is taking on the 50m and 100m freestyle, and 50m and 100m butterfly.

Pajarillaga is swimming in the 100m freestyle, 50m freestyle, 100m freestyle, and 200m backstroke.

Thompson is competing

See CNMI on Page 19

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, national swimming coach Richard Sikkel, Jinie Thompson, Kean Pajarillaga, and Taiyo Akimaru are seen during their swimming practice at the Aqua Resort Club Saipan.